Slave Harem in the Labyrinth of the Other World

101-150

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Chapter 101 - Preparation

We have found the boss room of 13th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
While exploring, we found a small room.
The door opened, and I walked inside the room.
I immediately understood that it was the waiting room since it had only two doors. One in front and one behind.

"Is the boss room ahead?"
"The boss Pick Hog is the upgraded version of Pig Hog. A really tough monster that attacks using its fore paws. Well, I think Roxanne-san will be alright, but please be careful."

The door inside the room opens.
I bring out Durandal in a hurry.

"The three of you handle Pick Hog, I will take care of Grass Bee."
"Okay."

The monster accompanying the boss was Grass Bee.
I finished it quickly.

I join the attack on Pick Hog.
Pick Hog is the boss of 13th floor. It is one size bigger than Pig Hog.
Its fore paw attack is similar to a drill.
Standing on its hind legs, it swings its fore paw down on Roxanne.

It is similar to what wild boars do on their short legs.
Is it okay not to help?
Such thoughts rushed through my head.
Roxanne lightly avoids its swing.

As expected of Roxanne.
Had I been there instead, I would have been hit.
No, I will never get hit because I always attack from behind.
I cautiously slash using Durandal.

With careful attacks, we manage to defeat Pick Hog without any accident.

Well we had already defeated bosses up to 15th floor in Quratar's labyrinth.
13th floor couldn't have been a problem.

"Sherry, which monster appears on Haruba's 14th floor?"
"It's Sarracenia."

Sarracenia huh?
The carnivorous plant-type monster, Sarracenia, whose weakness is fire magic.
We proceed further on 14th floor under Roxanne's guidance.
After killing Sarracenia with 5 [Fire Storm]s, I then kill remaining Pig Hogs with 3 more [Water Ball]s.

Next, we fight against a group of three different types of monsters.
First, I kill two Sarracenias using 5 [Fire Storm]s.
After that, I finish one Grass Bee using 3 [Breeze Storm]s, and then I slaughter the remaining Pig Hog with a single [Water Ball].
9 attacks in total huh?

"Hmm… Even though there were three types of monsters, I needed one extra spell to finish them, unless I made an error in the count. Please guide us to another group of three types of monsters."
"Understood."

I instruct Roxanne.
The battle duration is longer, but we can fight on Haruba's 14th floor.
I can finish a group of one type of monsters using 5 spells. If someone survives, Roxanne can deal with them.
That much can not be avoided.

Having reached Haruba's 14th floor, I move to Bode's labyrinth in the afternoon.
Every now and then, I drop by Tare's and Bode's labyrinths to keep a tab on the progress of their exploration.
There may be an easy floor similar to Quratar's 16th floor.

"How far has the exploration progressed?"
"11th floor."

The explorer at the entrance replies.

The exploration of Bode's and Tare's labyrinths is progressing slower than Vale's labyrinth.
Because there are three labyrinths, the Duchy's order of knights had to split up.
Or perhaps, they decided to focus on the exploration of Haruba's labyrinth?

The party led by the Duke and Cassia, and also the party led by Gozer were exploring Haruba's labyrinth.
Gozer's party will blaze through Bode's 11th floor in no time.
However, it is probably wasteful for such a high level party as Gozer's to explore 11th floor while they can explore higher floors.
It is rational to break through floors one by one without diverting the focus.

So far, I have not directly contributed to the exploration.
Since it is acceptable to just enter the labyrinth, there doesn't seem to be any problem.
And I defeated Heinz the bandit.
Since it helped the knights in reducing the number of patrols, I helped them at least that much.

"I will stop by the furniture store before heading home."
"Furniture store?"
"The bed is getting smaller for us, we can't keep using it as it is right now."

I thought about it when we were in the small room on Bode's 1st floor.
And I would like to rid myself of this uneasiness as soon as possible.
Whenever I express that I will expand my harem, I get tensed.
Fearing that someone may object.

Nope, I don't plan to increase it just yet.
It is just preparation.
Preparation for when I have to expand it.
So I am feeling a little guilty.

"I see. It would certainly be great. Thank you for caring about us."

I am feeling even more guilty now since the bed is actually for my

selfish motives.
I jump to Quratar's adventurers guild and head to the furniture store.

"I don't think we should buy a large one. May be another bed similar in size to the one we have? I am thinking of setting them side-by-side. What do you think?"

I propose that while checking the beds.
The current bed we have is quite large.
It should be able to accommodate 3 more if I add another bed next to it.

I am not sure if two beds can be attached though. It may create a gap in the centre.
Since I sleep in the centre, I would rather not have that.
Depending on how I arrange it, the gap may not be directly below my butt, so there may not be any problem.

"It will be too big."
"I will eventually increase the number of party members."

Even though I was tensed, I tried to appear composed.
I must keep reiterating that I will increase the number of party members.
It will be awkward if someone objects when the time comes.

"Is that so?"
"A-Also, it will be wasteful to throw the current bed away."

I give her another reason in a hurry.
Things may not go as smoothly as I thought.

"I understand. Let's go with what you said."
"Next time, can we buy a shelf?"
"Shelf?"

With this, I can use 30% discount.
Since the owner of the furniture store is a merchant, 30% discount should be effective.
The more the party members, the more the luggage. Like I said, it is preparation.

Had I said that I would be buying a shelf and had then suggested buying a bed too, it would probably have been better. Oh well, it's too late now.
Men play it fair.
They break through the front.

They caress it and shove it in from the front.
Only cowards do it from the back.
I'm envious!

I leave the matter of choosing the shelf to the three.
They will be the ones using the shelves mainly.
So it's better to leave it to them.

Their group, with Roxanne in the middle surrounded by Sherry and Miria, is clamoring while deciding on the shelf.
I'm observing them from the side without throwing in my opinion.
It took them quite some time to choose.
I purchase the bed and the shelf they chose, and return home.

"Stay here until the furniture arrives. We are already done with the labyrinth for today. You guys will be preparing the dinner. In the meantime, I'll head to Vale."
"Vale? Trading house?"
"That's right, but I'm not going there to add another member. I'm going there to gather information in order to make preparation. Also, I have to express my gratitude to the slave merchant for introducing me to the trading house in the Imperial capital."
"I understand."

Roxanne consents.
As for the number of party members; the more, the better.
It is necessary to expand the party.
Roxanne and Sherry both are aware of this.

However, not much time has passed since I bought Sherry.
You don't find beauties like Roxanne and Sherry every time you visit the trading house.
Therefore, this time, I'm going there only to gather information.

There can be up to six people in a party.

You can't randomly add party members.
I must be careful in choosing the next member of the party.

If I go to the trading house in the Imperial capital, there's only that beautiful woman who was unwilling to be my slave.
If I go to Alan, the slave merchant in Vale, he may introduce me to more trading houses.
And I have one more thing to ask him about.
The slave merchant in the Imperial capital mentioned slave auction.

Sherry may know about it but I can't ask her about such a thing.
So I'll ask Alan, the slave merchant.

"Well then, I'm leaving."
"Okay, take care."
"Take care."
"Take care, desu."

After having been seen off by the three, I leave the house.
I jump to Vale's adventurers guild and head to Alan's trading house thereon.
There's no change in the townscape at all.

"Is the owner here?"
"Wait here, please."

I was led inside after I asked the person who came to receive me.
It's the usual waiting room.

"Oh dear customer, welcome."

Alan appears before long.
I was then led to the back room.

"I went to the trading house in the Imperial capital last time. I thank you for introducing me to that slave merchant."
"Yes, I heard that there was a successful transaction and that both the parties were satisfied."

Even though he was forced to offer me 30% discount?
They have no way of finding it out, it seems.

“We’re good for the time being but I intend to add another party member in near future.”
“Exploration of labyrinths seems to be going well for you. That’s good.”
“Thanks to Roxanne and Sherry.”

When I went to buy Roxanne, I was short of money, so I had to wait before buying her.
But now I’m intending to buy a fourth slave.
From this slave merchant’s viewpoint, things must be going well for me.

“Since I explore labyrinths, quality of party members matters more to me than the number of party members. Therefore, rather than increasing the number of party members in a rush, I’m searching for good combat-ready slaves carefully.”
“Well said.”

Actually, there’s no other option for the party size is limited to six.
And then there’s my vigor.
Because I have Sex Maniac, I have to go for more.

“You need a party member that’s strong if you are to challenge higher floors. For stronger slaves, you might want to give the slave auction a try.”
“Auction?”

Fortunately, the conversation moves to auction without my asking.

“The slave auction is held on holidays, that is four times a year. The slave auction is held at Quratar’s merchants guild. On holidays, normal auctions are called off and the guild is reserved for the slave auction only. In the slave auction, many combat-ready slaves, who are suited to be explorer or adventurer, are exhibited.”
“And I can pick a strong one from among them?”
“Yes. The entrance fee is 1,000 Nars per person. It is designed to filter out those who attend only out of curiosity and those who try to manipulate the price. In case your bid succeeds, the fee can be appropriated toward the bid.”

1,000 Nar is indeed quite high if you’re a spectator.

However, to those bidding for slaves in excess of 100,000 Nars, it's not that much.

Furthermore, if my bid succeeds, the fee will be returned.
If all the people attending the auction place a bid in order to have their fee refunded, the price will go up.
Ingenious.

"Would doing so not drive up the price?"
"At the very least, the price can't be manipulated, I believe."

The slave merchant grins.

"Will Alan-dono be exhibiting his slaves?"
"Of course, it's a stage for slave merchants after all. Unfortunately, due to some circumstances, I have let go of the centre of my exhibition's attraction already."

That must be Roxanne.
I don't know what the circumstances were.
If I feel the need to know, I'll have Roxanne tell me.

Had Roxanne been sold at the auction, it wouldn't have been for 420,000 Nars.
30% discount isn't effective in an auction.

That's right.
There's a drawback of buying at an auction. 30% discount isn't effective there.
Should I keep my search restricted to trading houses then?

But there's less than a month till the next holiday.
It's likely that they won't show me their best slaves.
If they have good slaves, they will try to sell them at the auction.
Even if I visit trading houses after the auction, I will only find leftover slaves.

So, should I try the auction even if it'll cost me a bit more?
Even a bit is a lot for a miser if it comes to money.
However, the charm of the auction is that there will be many to choose from.

“I guess I can find a good member for my party at the auction.”
“Indeed. I look forward to meeting you at the auction.”

I wrap up the conversation and head home.

“There will be an auction on the coming holiday. We will go there to look for a new member for our party. Expansion of our party is necessary to increase our battle strength.”

I talk to the three after returning home.
It is better to make their mind up beforehand.

“I understand.”
“At the auction, we will definitely be able find a good member for our party.”
“Miria wants to be elder sister, desu.”

Like I thought, Sherry knows about the auction.
There’s no knowing if the next member will be younger than Miria though.
Well, she will be senior at least.

“Don’t ask for a little sister for yourself.”
“Okay, desu.”

After that, we try our new bed.

“Roxanne, please cherish it until the number of members increases.”

That doesn’t mean that I won’t love Roxanne anymore.
My love won’t change with the number of members.

Chapter 102 - Whole Fish

We are halfway through 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
When the battles are short, hunting is smooth. The longer the battles get, the more strenuous the hunting becomes.
The monsters here are not as easy for a battle to be over in a flash, but they are not so strong either to get us fired up.

This is rather a concern.
Because the battles here are longer, I may get exposed to consecutive attacks and may get myself into precarious position if I lose my focus.
However, even though I am aware of it, I keep losing my focus.

"Miria!"
"Yes, desu."

I regain my focus with Roxanne's shout.
She was reprimanding Miria.
Miria was going solo again. Although she sticks to the formation, there are times when she goes ahead on her own.
I empathize with her for I tend to lose my focus too.

My thoughts on 14th floor: it's boring and slow.
Finally, only one monster is left. Roxanne is yet to receive an attack.
Her performance is incredible as ever.

In the end, instead of breaking through 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, we decide to check on the progress of the exploration of Bode's labyrinth.

"How far has the exploration progressed?"
"Just reached 12th floor."

We drop by Bode's labyrinth in the afternoon, and ask the explorer at the entrance.

"Which monster appears on 12th floor?"
"Mabream."

“Mabream, desu!?”

For some reason, Miria repeats after the explorer.
Her serious eyes seek me all of a sudden.

Her serious eyes turn sparkling.
Looks like she wants to bring something up.
I wonder what.

“Mabream is a fish-type monster. It drops white fish.”

Sherry tells me the reason.
Fish huh?
Miria is still staring at me.
Rather than sparkling, her eyes are burning with appetite.

“T-Then can you take me to 12th floor?”

I can not help it.
I take out the emblem of the Harz duchy from my backpack.
Upon seeing the emblem, the explorer joins our party.

“Okay, please follow me.”

Following the explorer, we enter Bode’s labyrinth.
We are in a small room with an ordinary door.
It is the same room you can find on any floor of a labyrinth.
The explorer leaves us here and heads back immediately.

“Mabream is a monster that specializes in long-range water magic attacks. It is resistant to water magic. Earth magic is its weakness.”
“Earth Magic huh? Can I ask of you for a small group since it is our first time fighting against this monster?”

After Sherry briefs, I ask of roxanne to guide us.
Mabream is a fish-type monster. It looks like a fish that has two long legs growing down its body.
Actually, looking only at its head, it looks more like a fish than a fish-type monster.
Nope, I am not sure anymore if it is its head or its body.

To top it off, there are two long and skinny legs stretching out. It is

truly disgusting.
Whatever. If they say it's fish-type, then it must be fish-type.
Even though it looks like a badly designed Martian.

I shoot a [Sand Ball].
After 4 shots, it collapses.
Mabream turns into smoke and disperses.
What remained was a white fish.

"Yes, desu!"

Miria jumps at it and brings it over excitedly.
Her eyes seek me again.
What does she want to say? I can guess what she wants.

"This is our dinner for tonight, I guess."
"Okay, desu!"

Miria bows her head.
We already have one, and I will be unnecessarily torturing her if I leave it for tomorrow.
But it looks like it would have been fine even if I had delayed it by a day.

We hunt near the entrance of the floor for a while.
Since the exploration of Bode's 12th floor has only just started,
It is best to not go further inside just yet.

I need the exploration of the floor to progress further in order to avoid the trap room with large number of monsters.
I can't guarantee our safety if we set foot in that trap room.

I cast [Meteor Crash].
The red-hot meteorites crash onto the monsters.
One shot?
Just one [Meteor Crash] seems to be enough for Mabream.

Mabreams seem to be weak against fire magic as well.
How do I know which monsters can be dispatched in one shot and which monsters can't be?
I am getting confused even more.

“Since [Meteor Crash] seems to be effective, I think we can proceed further inside.”
“I guess.”
“I don’t think there will be any problem.”
“Instead of searching for monsters, how about we explore this floor?”

I instruct Roxanne to stop searching for monsters.
I felt bored while we were on Haruba’s 14th floor.
But here, I might be able to set off some fireworks.

[Metoer Crash] is an area of effect magic attack.
If I were to use it inside a small room with a lot of monsters, it would be massacre.
If they can be killed in one shot, it doesn’t matter how many monsters there are.
I want to light things up to let out all the frustration I built up on 14th floor.

While heading deep inside 12th floor, I cast [Meteor Crash].
We are searching for the room packed with monsters, taking out the monsters all the while.
I’m not using [Sand Storm] too much. I’m relying on Durandal to recover my MP.

There’s no knowing what may happen inside the labyrinth.
Also, it’s possible that they won’t be dead in one [Meteor Crash] next time.
I should save some MP for contingencies.

As always, when you try to find something, it is always difficult to find it.
But I carry on searching.
And I have finally found it.
The door opens. When I enter the small room, fish-type monsters were there in the middle.

It’s a big catch.
It’s a great catch.
It’s fishing time.

Unfortunately, there are no seagulls here to set the mood.
As planned, I try to wipe them out in one shot.
I invoke [Meteor Crash].

Suddenly, it feels as if all my MP has vanished.
It feels as if something has left my body.
It feels as if I'm getting engulfed in darkness.

D-Damn it!
How can I be this stupid?
How can I be this foolish?

I had no idea I was this incompetent.
I had no idea my abilities were this lacking.
The consumption of MP of an area of effect magic attack increases with the number of monsters.

If it's not the case, then this is harassment.
May be because I used a bonus spell?
This world is against me.

I'm down.
I'm depressed.
I'm Hayashi Shrio.
When a person doesn't know how to write the kanji for depression, he ends up writing the kanji for Hayashi Shiro.

Hayashi (林)
Shi (四)
Rō (郎)
Looks like
Depression (鬱)
Doesn't it?

"As expected of Master."
"All those monsters were wiped out in one shot."
"Amazing, desu."

The monsters seem to be dead, but I can't hear them clearly.
The stress I released earlier is back again.
I intended to release my stress but ended depressed instead.

I open my Item Box.
I swallow a handful of strengthening pills.
Having recovered my MP, I get back on my feet.

So there is such a drawback of using area of effect magic attack.
Because I have been fighting against four or five monsters, I didn't notice it.
One more monster wouldn't have made that much of a difference.
But the room was brimming with monsters.

A lot of dropped items are lying scattered around the room.
Needle Woods, native to Bode's 11th floor, were mixed in as well.
They dropped branches and leaves.
There are a lot of white fish.

Miria excitedly brings something over to me.

"It is whole fish."
"Whole fish?"
"A rare item dropped by Mabream."

Sherry tells me.
So it's a rare drop.

Miria passes the whole fish to me.
It's whole indeed, complete with head and tail.
Even Appraisal says 'whole fish'.

"Then this, too, will be for tonight's dinner."
"Eat, desu!"
"It's a rare drop and will sell for a high price. Are you sure about this?"
"Whole fish is rare. It is usually eaten on special occasions."

Roxanne and Sherry urge me to reconsider.
In this world, it seems to be eaten on special days.
Even though a lot of white fish were dropped by the monsters, there was only one whole fish.
It does seem to be quite rare.

"Oh well, it is too much for one person anyway."

The whole fish is bigger than even my hands. Twenty? Thirty? No, about forty centimeters.
Even a piece of it will be more than enough for a person.
However, If it is Miria, I'm sure she can eat it all by herself.

"A small piece is fine. Miria, too, says that she is fine with a small piece."
"The head of the family eats the first piece of whole fish. The rest is distributed among the family members."

So it is not one for everyone kind of fish huh?
Although we got only one whole fish, I decide to stop exploration of Bode's 12th floor.
I still have no idea how to keep stress from building up, but we resume the exploration of Haruba's 14th floor nevertheless.
We return home in the evening.

"Master, there is a message from Luke, the broker. There seemed to be a successful bid for Bat Monster Card."

When we arrived at home, there was a note left by Luke, the broker.
The process of upgrading equipment seems to be going smoothly.

"It increases rate of evasion if fused with an armor. If fused simultaneously with Kobold Monster Card, the effect gets doubled."

Sherry starts explaining the moment I look at her.
She seems to have learned her role well by now.

For dinner, Miria simmers the whole fish with wine and fish sauce.
Salt doesn't seem to have been added.
The flavor is similar to Mediterranean cuisine, Acqua Pazza. (TN: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Acqua_pazza_%28food%29)

"Wow! It's really delicious."

I first show them how to use chopsticks.
Although there's fat, the texture is firm.
Yet it melts in the mouth.
Delicious!

As expected of a rare drop.

White fish doesn't come even close.

After me, Roxanne and Sherry help themselves to the boiled fish prepared by Miria.

"It is delicious."

They're delightfully eating the boiled whole fish.
Their smile is delightful indeed.

"Can I have a little more."
"Yes, desu."

During the meal, the fish was distributed by Miria.
Was preparing white fish along with whole fish a bad idea? We didn't get to it because of the whole fish.
It would have been even better had there not been that unpleasant look about Miria's face while distributing the fish.
It gave the feeling that something was off.

Next Morning. I collect the Bat Monster Card from the merchants guild.
I immediately hand it to Sherry upon returning home.

"Roxanne, take off your shoes and pass them to me."
"Wha- okay."

Roxanne takes off her hard leather shoes.
And puts them on the table.
It will be a good idea to enhance Roxanne's equipment this time.

Apart from Sacrificial Misanga, there is a need to enhance her equipment more than others'.
In order to compensate for the drop in her level.
Roxanne can dodge most of the attacks and hardly gets hit, so it is not necessary to enhance her armor.
Therefore, I need to attach those skills to Roxanne's equipment that match her fighting style.

This skill increases rate of evasion which is perfect for her.
Sherry and Miria are not receiving attacks that frequently, so it is not needed to increase their evasive ability for the time being.

As for me, when I head out to the front, I equip Durandal, so I can compensate for it with Durandal's HP Absorption skill.
Roxanne will make full use of this skill.

Since Kobold Monster Card will only double the effect, I don't see its need at this point.
I am thankful for that.
Another successful bid for Kobold Monster Card will take more time and money.
And it may be a good idea to first try the skill out before using Kobold Monster Card.

"Well then, can you please fuse the card with these shoes?"
"Certainly."

Sherry picks up the hard leather shoes, with one free skill slot, which we looted from the thieves.
She performs the card fusion casually.
She is completely used to it by now.

"As expected of Sherry."
"Brilliant as always."
"I did it!"
"Amazing, desu."

When I use Appraisal, it was showing as Hard Leather Shoes of Willow.
Is willow used here to draw comparison with the wind?

"I plan on having everyone try it, but Roxanne will have a go first."
"Okay."

I pass the Hard Leather Shoes of Willow to Roxanne.
Once Roxanne had equipped it, we moved to Haruba's 14th floor.

From what I saw, there was no apparent change after she equipped it.
Well, even before she equipped it, the monsters hardly ever managed to land attacks on her.
If it is just about evading attacks of the monsters, it is the same as before.

I borrow the shoes from Roxanne to try it out myself.
I don't feel any change in particular.
It's just that there is no apparent change like when I use bonus points to increase my status or when I change jobs or when I level up.

I even try to suicide attack a monster using Durandal, but I still don't feel any significant difference.
Well, it did become easier to evade the attacks than before to some extent.
If the difference was considerable, I wouldn't hate it this much.
If I look at the total number of attacks received, it has probably decreased.

I let Sherry and Miria try it out as well.
Albeit slightly, the number of attacks received has decreased.
Well, they hardly receive attacks to begin with.

Still, Hard Leather Shoes of Willow could prove to be a good equipment for Roxanne.
At some point, it may be a good idea to decrease the attacks received by Sherry and Miria as It will increase the efficiency of hunting. But it is not a matter to consider for now.

"This equipment will be for Roxanne. Are you fine with it?"
"It's a good idea."
"Okay, desu."

I confirm with Sherry and Miria.

"So Roxanne, it's yours from now on."
"It is better than Master's equipment, Master should be the one to use it."
"I have tried it already. It will be more effective if Roxanne uses it."
"Okay, thank you."

Roxanne bows her head.
To make her stronger, the Hard Leather Shoes of Willow were hence passed to Roxanne.

Chapter 103 - Coming across

We have cleared 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth.
When it comes to labyrinths, Haruba's and Quratar's are the best.
There's no such thing as finding the boss right at the entrance.
Exploring a floor takes time.

While there are instances of finding the boss room in the left having started the exploration from the left, there are instances of finding the boss room in the right having started the exploration from the left, too.
The time required to clear a floor depends mainly on luck. Nothing can be done about it.
In case of 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth, the time required was short.

The objective of our party is not just exploration.
Because we have Roxanne in our party, we can hunt efficiently as well.
For this reason, we keep moving from here to there to somewhere else.
Which increases the time required to clear a floor.

But there's no knowing when you may find yourself at a dead end, so gaining experience in the meantime is efficient.
There's also a possibility that we can't take out monsters on a floor.
Therefore, efficiency aside, you have to keep leveling up or the floors may become too difficult to clear.
Even though we are stronger by the standards of this world, the difficulty increases with every floor.

That said, there's no such thing as safety margin.
Even if you're adequately leveled, one wrong step in labyrinth may lead to your undoing.
It is also said that you can be surrounded by multiple groups of monsters if you take too long to exterminate a group of monsters.

If you laugh at incompetence of others, others will soon laugh at you.

In labyrinth, survival is the top priority.
It's a noteworthy horse that can return its rider to safety.

"Can we perform well on higher floors with the level of our strength?"
"Umm… well, that's…"

Sherry finds it difficult to answer my question.

"Forget about it, what about other parties?"
"If there are combat slaves in the party, they go for higher floors as much as possible."
"Is that so?"
"Yes."

Roxanne answers in Sherry's stead.

"Umm… they try to go for higher floors as much as possible. The higher the experience you gain, the quicker you become strong. Although the danger on higher floors is great, it doesn't mean that total annihilation is the only outcome of failure. Owner of the party normally has access to recovery magic and recovery medicines, therefore, the danger to the owner of the party is not as great."

Sherry explains.
In other words, slaves are sacrificed in emergency situations?
Although the danger is great on higher floors, combat slaves are subjected to most of that danger.
The risk to the owner is minimal.

Now I know why sherry was hesitating.
If the owner doesn't know that, it's better for the slaves.
Combat slaves have it tough after all.

"But there will be no such thing in our party. It will be troublesome for me if Roxanne, Sherry and Miria are not there."
"Thank you very much. Still, it's better to go for higher floors."
"Okay, thank you very much."
"Party members are irreplaceable."
"…Thank you, desu."

Miria was the last to express her gratitude because she was waiting for Roxanne to translate.

The boss of Haruba's 14th floor was Nepenthes which we had already defeated on Quratar's 12th floor.
The Nepenthes couldn't land an attack on Roxanne, the dodging ability of whom had increased even more due to Hard Leather Shoes of Willow.
I was in charge of attacking the boss.

"Which monster appears on 15th floor of Haruba's labyrinth?"
"Bitch Butterfly."
"Its weakness is wind magic, right?"

After defeating the boss of 14th floor, I ask Sherry.

"It is."
"Because we have already fought against Bitch Butterflies on Quratar's 16th floor, we can afford to skip trial, Roxanne."
"Try to search for groups with more Bitch Butterflies than Sarracenias."

Sherry interrupts.

"Why?"
"Have you forgotten that Bitch Butterflies are resistant to fire magic?"

They are?
I don't remember hearing such a thing before.
She always briefs about the attribute of magic which the monsters are weak against.
Or perhaps I didn't pay attention to any information more than that?

If I use [Fire Storm] against a group of Sarracenias and Bitch Butterflies, I may be able to take out Sarracenias but Bitch Butterflies will still be standing.
I need to be more careful regarding composition of monster groups, it seems.
Since I'm a Wizard, I'm surprisingly able to use my head.

"I see. As expected of Sherry. From now on, I will ask for your input before issuing instructions."
"Okay."

“Well then, Roxanne.”
“Understood.”

The first group Roxanne guides us to comprises two Bitch Butterflies and a Sarracenia.
I first take the Bitch Butterflies out in six [Breeze Storm]s.
With three more [Fire Ball]s, the remaining Sarracenia drops down.
The monsters seem to be becoming stronger which is within expectation.

“Sherry, do magic attacks not work at all against magic resistance?”
“I don’t think there’s such a thing. But I don’t know exactly how effective it is. And it also differs from monster to monster. I’m sorry.”
“Should we test it then? Roxanne, search for a group with more Sarracenias than Bitch Butterflies.”
“Understood.”

I ask of Roxanne.
We find a group of one Bitch Butterfly and two Sarracenias.
The Sarracenias drop down in six fire spells. The Bitch Butterfly collapses in four more wind spells.
Four spells huh?
Not as much as I thought.

“Guide us to groups with more Sarracenias.”
“I see. Understood.”

There are a maximum of four monsters in a group on 15th floor.
If Sarracenias are more, Bitch Butterflies can be no more than one.
If there are two of each, we first take Bitch Butterflies out.
The higher the floor, the more difficult it gets. With the number of attacks required increasing by one, duration of battle increases as well. It may become quicker with [Transcending Life and Death] but it’s not useable for the time being. (TN: Ignore Life and Death has been changed to Transcending Life and Death.)

“Thank you, Sherry. Had I not tested it, I wouldn’t have got it.”
“Not at all.”

Six fire spells inflict damage to Bitch Butterflies equivalent to two wind spells.

It's quite a difference now that I think about it.
It's important to take magic resistance into account as well when shortlisting combination of monsters.

I try to use [Meteor Crash] next.
I was able to take out Sarracenias in one shot but Bitch Butterfly is still standing.

As a result, I have understood one thing.
To confirm it, I undertake another experiment.
I move to 12th floor of Haruba's labyrinth and use [Meteor Crash] on Grass Bees.
Grass Bees turn into smoke in just one [Meteor Crash].

Because I have leveled up, I was able to take out Grass Bees in one shot.
Is that why I was able to take out Mabream Lv12 in one shot?
So it wasn't due to attribute of magic.
To confirm my notion, I have to try a floor where I can take out Sarracenias or Fly Traps, but not Bitch butterflies or grass bees, in one shot.

"Which reminds me, I once fried the goat meat dropped by Pan after marinating it in fish sauce."

I talk to Miria.
It's the Tatsuta-age I made back in the days.

"Okay."
"If I do the same with fish, it'll be delicious, right?"

It's believed that bream tempura is so delicious that Tokugawa Ieyasu deteriorated his health from excessively eating it which resulted in his death.
It will be a similar dish.
Moreover, it will be a whole fish.
It will surely be delicious.

"Eat, desu!"

It was an expected reply.

“But we can’t eat it tonight because it has to kept for some time after applying fish sauce. We will have it for tomorrow’s dinner. It will be to celebrate our clearing 14th floor. Roxanne, Sherry, are you fine with it?”
“Yes, thank you very much.”
“I think it will be delicious.”

With the approval of the two, we move to 12th floor of Bode’s labyrinth.
I take Mabreams out in four [Sand Storm]s.
Four spells without Monk?

The monsters turn into smoke.
And dissipate.
One of the dropped items was whole fish.
This fish will be for the tomorrow’s dinner.

“Wow, desu!”

Miria jumps at it and brings it over to me immediately.

“It is quite rare for Mabream to drop whole fish. As expected of Master, you have got a whole fish at the first attempt.”

The reason as to why I don’t have Monk is that I had already replaced it with Cook.
Cook has a skill that increases drop rate of rare items.
Even then, I was quite lucky to have got a whole fish at the first attempt.
I don’t mind it, however, for Miria respects me even more now.

I receive the whole fish from Miria.
Although it’s whole fish, it has neither bones nor internal organs.
Also, how can a monster, Mabream in this case, remain after it’s dead.
How can this be possible?

“It is believed that every Mabream has a bream in its body. Therefore, it’s also called Bream’s Bream.”

Sherrys tells the puzzled me.
Is that why it looks the same as the monster?

Oh well, it doesn't matter.
We carry on hunting.
We have collected two whole fish after hunting about ten Mabreams.

"Whole fish, desu!"

Miria brings it over.
She seems to have learned this brahim word.
I put it in my Item Box.

"I have heard that whole fish doesn't stay good to eat for too long."
"Miria is saying the same. As expected of Master."
"Ah, but I have also heard that it stays good for long if cooked."

Sherry, who seems to be hesitant, is correct.
As you would expect from Sherry.
I nod to Sherry and decide to leave.
With two whole fish, Miria will surely be satisfied.

"Umm… Master, I'm sorry."

When we were about to leave, Roxanne apologizes all of a sudden.

"What happened?"
"I can smell an acquaintance. They're coming here from the entrance."
"Acquaintance?"

This is such a convenient ability she has.

"You should better leave. Because I'm in close proximity to them, they must have smelled me. If I leave, they may get suspicious of me."
"Are they not a friendly acquaintance?"
"Sort of."
"Is that so?"

This acquaintance is someone Roxanne doesn't want me to see.
However, using [Warp] now doesn't seem to be a wise decision.
If Roxanne can smell them from here, they must have smelled us from there.
If I run away now, they'll find out.

This can be such an inconvenient ability at times.

If they ever visit 12th floor of Bode's labyrinth, we may encounter them again.
Miria will surely want more fish.
If they have smelled us on 12th floor of Bode's labyrinth, Haruba's labyrinth won't be safe either.

"If they are close to us, they must have smelled me, too."
"There's no helping it then. Let's wait here."
"I'm sorry. They may say strange things, please don't pay any mind to them."
"Are they really that despicable?"

Roxanne seems to detest them.
She will hate to meet her acquaintances after becoming a slave even if she doesn't hate them.
And if she hates them, she will hate to meet them even more after becoming a slave.

"They are a sworn enemy from back in the days."
"No matter what happens, Roxanne has allies now."
"Thank you very much, Master."

I try to provide support to Roxanne.
I gently put my hand on her shoulder.
I put the Rod of Offerings back in my Item Box and wait for this acquaintance of Roxanne.

"Ohoho~ if it isn't Roxanne."

A party of six appears before long.
A party of four beast warriors, an adventurer and a monk.
Their levels are quite high.
Beast Warrior… Lv99!?

"Long time no see."
"Even though it has been such a long time, you're still a stupid woman as ever."

The one having conversation with Roxanne is a female Beast Warrior Lv29.

Appraisal shows her as a female.
She's 19. Three years older than Roxanne.
Is this woman the acquaintance of Roxanne?

About her looks, no comments.
There's no comparison with Roxanne.

"You haven't changed either."
"Don't you compare the now-me with the previous-me! I have been gaining strength for all these six months!"
"Really?"

This woman's social status seems to be higher than Roxanne's for she has slightly lowered herself.
She seems to have a family name as well.
A person having a family name seems to be rare in this world.

Her pride seems to be bloated, too.
Her long hair is curled into drills.
Her hair is shiny like a doll's.
Doolittle was the first ever air-raid on Japan. (TN: Romaji for 'shiny like a doll' looks like romaji for 'Doolittle'.)

Women of low social status can't grow long hair.
Hair care being the reason.
It's a proof that she can spend on her hair.
It's a proof that she's wealthy.

"Albeit faint, I caught your seedy smell while we were on our way to the labyrinth. This much is nothing for me."

Didn't Roxanne say that they were at the entrance?

"What brings you here?"
"Roxanne, you're still an illiterate woman who knows nothing. I feel so pity for you that I can't help but tell you. Simon the mad dog has become active as of late. His wanted posters have been circulated as well. My family don't want anything to do with him but they can't ignore the prospect of bounty."
"Simon the mad dog huh?"
"Simon the mad dog was one of the two experts of wolfkin tribe. He

defeated Sabo once but this time, we will prove that Baradam family is the strongest in the tribe."

Sabo Baradam is the male Beast Warrior Lv99 who is standing beside her.
He does look strong.
He's Lv99 after all.

"Err…"

Roxanne appears to be troubled to speak.
Because Simon is already dead.
It's impossible for Sabo to defeat him now.
But there is no evidence.

"You're still an undisciplined woman as ever. Although you are able to speak Brahim somewhat, you don't seem to be fluent at it yet."

This woman seems to have misunderstood the reason as to why Roxanne was faltering.
She thinks that Roxanne is unable to speak because she's not good at Brahim.

"Err… not at all."
"Your turning into a slave was actually helpful. I must thank you for that. It's regretful that, due to various reasons, your family couldn't earn enough."
"To do such a thing… you!"

Roxanne is at a loss for words at the woman's revelation.
I have heard about it before.
That Roxanne was sold into slavery because her family couldn't pay tax.
So it was all plotted by this woman?

"It was easy for me with the influence of my Baradam family. The reason as to why I did this is because you, Roxanne, are a bitch who seduces men!"
"I don't."
"Although you're denying with words, your actions speak louder. How many men have you seduced already?"

“I know because the eyes they look at you with are totally different from the eyes they look at me with! I know because he was my fiance!”
“I have no idea what you’re talking about.”

I see.
So it was same for the men of wolfkin tribe, too.
Her chest is just that alluring.
It was inevitable.

“Now that you’re a slave, you have seduced a weak human. Well, this is what you were famous for. Seducing, that is.”
“Please refrain from using ill words for my Master!”

Roxanne raises her voice.

Chapter 104 - Duel

“Oh my, is Roxanne ordering me now?”

Upon Roxanne’s raising her voice, the eyes of her unfriendly acquaintance turn into that of a sworn enemy’s.

“Not at all. I don’t mind your speaking ill of me but I won’t allow you to speak ill of my Master.”
“Then I challenge you to a duel.”
“Duel?”
“If you want me to respect your master, you will have to make me respect your master. So Roxanne’s master, would you please allow your slave to have a duel with me?”

The woman loosens her cheeks and forces a smile.
Roxanne turns toward me.

“Master…”
“I will issue the challenge to you if the duel between Roxanne and I receives your acknowledgement.”
“What is this about?”
“Only free people can take part in duels, therefore, challenge to a duel is issued only to a free person. However, it is not necessary for you to take part in the duel yourself. You can nominate your proxy. It is a slave’s duty to protect their master after all.”

Sherry explains.
No, I wanted you to explain this situation, not duel.
Roxanne and the woman were talking too much too fast, so I couldn’t follow their conversation.

“If you nominate Roxanne to take part in the duel in your stead, I will issue the challenge to you.”

This woman isn’t explaining the situation either.

Roxanne is a slave, so the challenge can’t be issued to her.
This woman can issue the challenge to me and I can nominate

Roxanne to be my proxy.
If I don't accept her challenge, will this woman not be able to have a duel with Roxanne?

So in this world, people challenge others in duels, not in courts?
Duels seem to be common here.
It's troublesome, however, that duels are so common here.

"Is she stronger than you?"

I whisper in Roxanne's ear.
If we compare their levels, Roxanne who's Beast Warrior Lv32 should be stronger than this woman who's Beast Warrior Lv29.
If the odds are in our favor, I may accept her challenge.

"We took part in a mock battle about half a year ago. Most of my attacks missed."
"And her attacks?"
"I didn't let her hit me, of course."

Yeah, of course.

"I don't know what cowardly methods you used six months ago to pull a draw but the me now is a lot stronger than the me six months ago. This time, I won't let you run away with your tail between your legs like a bitch that you are. I will crush you completely."

Roxanne, too, has become a lot stronger in these six months, just so you know.
Half a year ago, she must have been Beast Warrior Lv6 at most.
This woman, who is Beast Warrior Lv29 now, couldn't have been below Lv6 half a year ago.

"Master, please allow me."
"Only if you think you can win."
"W-What might you mean by that?"

The woman seems to disagree with Roxanne's and my conversation.

"I can't imagine Roxanne losing but-"
"Then please accept the challenge and allow me to shatter the disillusions of both the master and the slave."

This is troublesome.
Because it's a duel, I might even lose Roxanne if she loses on an off chance.
This really is troublesome.
That said, I can't imagine Roxanne losing to this woman.

Even if I win, there is nothing for me to gain from this duel.
This is troublesome indeed.

"Having come all the way here and having issued the challenge, it will be an insult to our Baradam family if you turn us down. Or do you perhaps want me to issue the challenge?"

Sabo, Beast Warrior Lv99, who has been keeping quiet till now, opens his mouth.

"Master, Sabo is the strongest Beast Warrior in our tribe. Please let me have a duel with her."
"I don't think I will lose to him, though."

He's Lv99, don't you know?

"What did you say!? I will not allow this woman to slander me like this!"

Sabo gets angry.

I thought that he was obediently following the woman but it doesn't seem to be the case.

Still, I have no idea as to why this woman thinks she can defeat Roxanne.
Are they perhaps on to something?
Have they got a hold of some special item or spell?

"I don't think Roxanne-san will lose to her. Even if it happens on an off chance, she has 'that'."

Sherry whispers in my ear.
By 'that', does she mean Sacrificial Misanga?
Roxanne and the woman both have Sacrificial Misanga equipped.
However, even if you have Sacrificial Misanga, it can't keep you from

getting hit.

“It’s a waste to give such a precious equipment to the likes of Roxanne. However, if she drops to her knees during the duel and begs for her life, I may spare her. Baradam family is famous for their benevolence after all.”

She seems to have heard Sherry’s words.
And she probably understands the meaning of ‘that’.
Well, she has one too, so it’s not surprising.
However, it will be this woman who’ll be asking for mercy if it comes that.

“Okay, okay. I get it.”

I don’t think I have any other option but to accede to this duel between these two.

“Thank you very much, Master.”
“Ohoho~ you have finally accepted. Roxanne, you better not be regretting it now. Well then, let’s head to the office of Harz duchy knights. If you back away now, it will really be distasteful.”

The woman turns around and heads toward the exit.
Other members of her party follow behind her.

“Will it be alright?”
“It’ll be alright. There is no monster near the small room at the entrance.”

When I ask Roxanne, she bows in respect and answers.
I didn’t ask about that.

“Permission of the order of knights is required for a duel. We should go, too.”

Sherry, too, bows in respect and advises.
Because I grew up in modern Japan, this affair seems awkward to me.
Duels are so common here yet I had never heard about it till now.

Are duels really that common in this world?

Roxanne's and Sherry's attitude suggests so, at least.
I let out a heavy sigh and head to the exit.

"Wait here."

When we arrive at the castle of Bode, the woman enters inside by herself.
Shortly afterwards, she comes back with Gozer.

"I, Gozer of the order of Harz duchy knights, confirm that she's a free person."

Gozer raises his eyebrow upon seeing me but continues without any hesitation.
Because as a third party, he is supposed to be neutral.

"Okay."

Roxanne takes a step forward.

"It will be Roxanne, huh? Do you have any objection to the duel?"
"None."
"Well then, the challenge to the duel, issued in accordance with the principle of self-defense, has been accepted. You have the right to nominate a proxy. Do you want to nominate a proxy?"
"No."

Upon Roxanne's answer, Gozer glances at me.
Did he think that I would fight myself?

"The other party wants the duel to be private. Do you accept?"
"Because I'm afraid that you will be using cowardly methods yet again."

The woman explains the reason.
I don't understand the logic behind this reason, though.

Roxanne turns toward me.
Well, I don't want to make it public either.
I nod in approval.

"I accept."
"Alright then, only the members of the two parties will be allowed."

Gozer heads inside the castle.

“I will not let you escape this time.”

The woman stomps the ground and goes ahead.
We follow them inside.

Gozer leads us to a corner in the courtyard of the castle.
There are neither trees, nor grass. Weed is growing sparsely.
Is it a training ground for the knights.

“Is this the place?”
“Because you don’t want to do it publicly, I had to prepare an appropriate place immediately.”
“Most of the duels are private, therefore, the order of knights keep a place ready.”

Sherry whispers in my ear.
So that the duel can be started right away?

“Roxanne, would you like to use my sword?”

If you are to fight immediately, at least take Durandal with you.
Durandal has both [HP Absorption] and [Incantation Interruption] skills.
I may be exposing it to Gozer but there’s no helping it.

“There’s no need. I’m more apt at using one-handed swords.”

Roxanne declines my offer.
Is that so?

I may pull out another bonus equipment but it will be a bad idea to go into the duel with a weapon which she’s not familiar with.
I may give her a full face helm in that case.
But they may raise an objection if I help her out with my equipment.

I have seven jobs at the moment. Is it alright to have so many active jobs?
Job effects are shared by all party members.
I have yet to test the accurate effect of seventh job, though.

I select bonus spell, [Partilization].

I haven't used it yet but it shares the effect of an item with a party member.
If I consume recovery medicine, Roxanne will be recovered.

I select [MP Full Release], too.
For contingencies.
Even though Roxanne and Sherry know about it, Gozer doesn't.
It's distasteful to help her in the midst of a duel but I can't afford to lose Roxanne.

I select [Lv99 Death] as well.
I have already confirmed that it's a single target magic attack.
Single target magic attack can be used against people.

I open Party Job Settings interface and switch Roxanne's job back to Beast Warrior Lv32.
Was it a bad decision to have had her level Warrior up all this time?
Well, I'm sure she can win against the woman even with Warrior Lv25.

"Here, desu."
"Thank you, Miria."

Miria passes a hard leather hat to Roxanne.
Roxanne had Hard Leather Shoes of Willow equipped beforehand.
I'm not sure if it's necessary but it's better to go in there with the best possible equipment.

"Would you two please come in front?"
"Coming."
"Roxanne, losing is not an option."
"Sister, all the best, desu."

Both of them proceed.

"Ohoho~ in a duel, lives are on the line. I hope you are prepared, Roxanne. I won't allow you to drop to your knees and beg for your life. Today shall be the day you die."

The woman goes back on her words just like that.
Baradam family doesn't seem to be as benevolent as she claimed.

“Ready.”
“Let me tell you something, Roxanne. Six months back, I didn’t have any party member but this time, I have Sabo. Baradam family is concentrating all their efforts on Sabo. He has already consumed a lot of dope medicine. You understand what that means, right?”

Like I thought, dope medicine seems to be a level-up item.
Is it because of dope medicine that he’s Beast Warrior Lv99?

Job effects are shared by all party members and the effects increase with level.
At Lv99, the effects must be considerable.
So the odds of her victory rest with her party members, huh?

“…”
“You seem to understand the meaning. Serves you right. Well then, drop dead already!”

The woman keeps taunting while Roxanne stands there silently, holding her sword.
She tightens the grip on her sword and swings it.
Roxanne lowers her body slightly and dodges it.
She follows it up with another downward swing. Roxanne dodges yet again.

So far, so good.
Roxanne is composed as ever.
Even with shared job effects of a Lv99 party member, this woman is unable to hit Roxanne.

Roxanne dodges yet another attack of the woman.
With the least possible movement, she is avoiding the oncoming slashes.
She sways her head to dodge the point of the sword and then draws her shoulder back from the line of the sword.

Because the woman was already committed to the attack, Roxanne thrusts her rapier after dodging the attack.
The woman jumps back and then falls over.

“I’m a lot stronger than I was six months ago. How can she still

dodge my attacks?”
“Kuku~ you attack recklessly as ever.”

The woman stands up angrily and voices hatefully.
She swings her sword again.
Roxanne lightly sidesteps.

“You were stronger six months ago.”

Nope. It’s Roxanne who has become a lot stronger.
It doesn’t mean that her opponent has weakened.

“Even though I’m so close… why…? How…?”

Sigh
This won’t work against Roxanne.

Roxanne tends to dodge attacks by a hair’s breadth.
Because at this distance, the opponent completely commits to the attack.
Having missed their attack after coming so close, the opponent tends to think that they can land the next attack.

The reason being, their sword misses by a centimeter- no, a millimeter.
Normally, it is impossible to achieve such a feat over and over again.
Therefore, they tend to perceive it as a fluke.

When this woman engaged Roxanne in a mock battle six months ago, she must have had similar train of thought.
Therefore, she thought that she could win next time.
But the result is same.

Like I suspected, it’s Roxanne whose ability far surpasses others’.
Being a Beast Warrior Lv6, she was able pull a draw against a Beast Warrior Lv29.
And now that she’s a Beast Warrior Lv32.
It’s not a contest anymore.

“I knew that I had become stronger in Master’s company, so I wanted to measure the level of my strength but this battle is not serving the purpose.”

“Kuh! This can’t be happening!”
“Are you done?”

Roxanne expresses her loss of interest and thrusts her sword.
Her rapier hits the throat of the woman.
The thrust pushes her away.

The woman falls over.
Flat on her back.

One hit was enough for her.
One thrust of Roxanne’s rapier.
It won’t be funny if she’s dead already.

“N-Not yet…”

Albeit shakily, the woman is trying to stand up.
While she was trying to stand up, a string falls down her knee.

It’s Sacrificial Misanga.
Was one attack of Roxanne enough to kill her?
When I used Appraisal, Sacrificial Misanga had disappeared from the list of her equipment.

This woman understands it as well.
That there’s no use in standing up now.
Next time, there won’t be any Sacrificial Misanga to her rescue.

“Although you plotted for my family to become poor, I must thank you. Because of you, I was able to meet such a splendid Master.”

Roxanne firms the grip on her sword.
One more stab and it will be the end.

“Roxanne.”

I call out to her.
It’s enough.
It’s better to end it as is.
There’s no need for Roxanne to dirty her hands.

Chapter 105 - Round two

“It’s alright?”

Roxanne took a few steps back, and then turned to look at the woman.
She looks at my expression, and seems to have guessed what I want to say.

“I don’t mind.”
“This match, it would become a draw.”
“That’s fine… isn’t it?”

I check with Sherry.

“There isn’t any problem, so it’s alright.”

After hearing Sherry’s answer with a doubtful look, I beckoned to Roxanne.
It’s better to make Roxanne leave it like this.

“Use this.”

A voice from one of the opponents party members calls out.
It seems to be Sabo.

“But…”
“It’s okay. He didn’t give her a sacrificial misanga. Now you can have an honorable draw.
“Ah, but…”

What is Sabo saying?
What is an honorable draw?

“I did my best.”
“You did.”
“As expected of Roxanne.”
“It was great-desu.”

Something still seems to be happening, and Roxanne is paying

attention without being negligent.
The opponent on the ground isn't moving anymore.
This is how it looks when the match is over.
This is the end of it.

"I'm always watching Master fighting, and I was wondering if I was able to become a little stronger myself."
"I see."
"The results of being trained by Master."

I don't think it's just that.

"The other party is giving up, do you want to end in a draw?"

Gozer comes closer and asks.

"Yes."

Roxanne answers, after glancing my way to see me nod.

"Is that alright for you too?"

Gozer goes to the opponents party and asks.
Sabo steps forward.

"There's no other choice."
"Then, this duel is a draw."

After Sabo gives his answer, Gozer declares it.
Sabo comes forward.
He approaches the woman sitting down.

"You are a disgrace to the Baradam house."

Sabo wields his sword.
He beheads the woman.

"Aaa."

What the…
My voice leaks out accidentally.

"I handed her a suicide ball, and I thought she would use it rather than suffer defeat. For someone not willing to go to those lengths,

we have no use for them in the Baradam household.”

Sabo disregards the dead woman, and makes a declaration.
The suicide ball is an item that does large damage to an enemy in exchange for your life.
Is that what he meant by honorable draw? A double K.O?

“What have you done?”

Gozer steps in.

“This is a problem for the Baradam household. This woman is under my control as the head of the Baradam house. There is no problem in this treatment.”
“I understand. I will check your intelligence card to confirm it.”

You understand it Gozer?
Gozer withdrew his objection easily.
Even if murder is performed in front of your eyes, it seems there is no problem if it’s a household issue.

“The draw is convenient. This is a disgrace against the Baradam house. We lost the duel, and it’s a great dishonor that the decisive blow was not given. For this disgrace I demand a duel with that woman.”

While showing Gozer his intelligence card, Sabo points at Roxanne.

“A rematch from a side that lost a duel can be refused. However, that isn’t the case this time because it was a draw.”

Sherry informs me.
So, a draw is no good?
There can be a rematch if it’s a draw.
It wasn’t good after all.

“Can we run away?”
“We’ll be a laughing stock if we do.”
“Please let me handle it.”

If you live, but are laughed at, it’s still better to escape.
That’s what I think, but Roxanne won’t agree.

“I’ve taken 50 doping pills by instruction. It will be good if you are prepared.”
“The theory says that he can’t get any stronger even if he takes more than 50.”

Sherry explains Sabo’s words.
The theory that doping pills raise your level but not your overall skills seems to be promising.
If he increased his level by 50, did he raise his level to 49 himself?

Is that how it is?
Is Roxanne stronger?
Roxanne would be stronger if you consider his Lv99 to be just Lv49.
If the attacks of a Lv29 could not touch her at Beast Warrior Lv6, then the attacks of a Lv49 might still not touch a Beast Warrior Lv32.

“Well, I’ll handle this one myself.”
“Um, well, Sabo’s strength is well known. It would be dangerous.”
“If Roxanne did it, it would be too easy a win.”

Would it be bad?
There’s the chance that his level was above Lv49, and some of the doping pills were useless.
Still, Roxanne might be able to manage it somehow.

“What! How dare you say that!”
“Sabo is probably considerably strong. He is quite famous among the wolf tribes. I can’t put Master at risk. If anything should happen…”
“It’s alright Roxanne. Your Master is not that weak.”
“Ah, yes.”

Roxanne tries to convince me, but I ignore it.
I don’t want to lose Roxanne.
I can’t take the risk.

He killed that woman.
If there is a chance for him to win, Sabo will not hesitate to kill Roxanne.
I can win, but it isn’t certain.

“The other party appears to be strong. I won’t be able to go easy on him. Even if he is killed there won’t be a problem?”
“Yes.”
“It’s alright.”

Sherry and Roxanne gave their approval.
There isn’t any problem?

“You accept the duel?”
“Is there a problem if I fight myself?”
“The side who received the duel request can pick a person to represent them. Their representative cannot be denied no matter who it is.”

I speak with Gozer after he came over.

“I will have to kill him, because I can’t afford to take it easy.”
“That’s always an expected outcome in a duel.”
“As I said, no matter how strong you are, I won’t lose.”

Sabo shouted.

“I don’t need a representative. After fighting the assistant instructor, it’s time for the master of the dojo to step forward.”
“I don’t understand your reason.”
“I don’t want to risk Roxanne. If you don’t want to die you will stop now.”
“I don’t need your bullshit.”

I gave you a chance to stop, and you won’t stop?
This is not just a threat.

“It’s best not to anger me.”
“That’s my line!”
“I didn’t sleep much last night, but I’m in my usual condition today. I don’t even need sleep to fight you.”
“Let’s hurry up and start.”

It’s no use.

“Then, if there are no objections, shall we begin?”
“Oo!”

Sabo yells, and I nod.
I don't pull out Durandal.
I'm not sure if I can win by fighting head on.
I should plan an alternative.

I can use [Overwhelming], and medicine to replenish myself.
The opponent might try to use the suicide ball, and might use items.
I can use the [MP Full Release].
I can win.

"Both of you, come forward."

Gozer begins the duel.
Sabo charges in.
Is discussion useless?
I use [Lv99 death], and indicate Sabo as the target.

There is no visible change.
Sabo is still approaching.
[Analyze] no longer shows sacrificial misanga in his equipment.
[Lv99 death] seems to have been effective.

I charge forward and use [Lv99 death] again.
Sabo swings his sword down.
I use [Overwhelming].
Everything becomes slow motion.

[Overwhelming] isn't used for fast movement.
I use it to avoid the sword.
My movements are good.

I grab Sabo's arm, which has already lost it's power.
I pull his arm while being careful not to touch the sword.
I move my leg.
I was able to move his center of gravity without much effort.

The effect of [Overwhelming] ends.
Sabo is on the ground.

"Um…"
"It only just began."

Roxanne and Sherry call out to me as I came back straight away.
Even Roxanne doesn't seem to be able to work out what happened.

"It's over."
"It was amazing. I saw you move your feet and grab his arm, but I don't understand what you did."

She saw everything.
I didn't really do anything.
Still, Roxanne seems to have seen everything.

"Defeating him with such swiftness, without even drawing your sword…"
"Wow, desu."

Sherry and Miria give praise.

"He is most certainly dead."

Gozer confirmed Sabo's status.
Gozer probably doesn't understand what happened either.
[Lv99 Death] seems to be an incantation that gives death to someone if they are Lv99.
At least they don't explode like [MP Full Release].

"I heard that Sabo is extraordinarily strong. Nobody from the Baradam house will be able to act up now. To defeat him so easily. As expected of Master."
"Well, I wonder. Roxanne might be stronger."

I wasn't able to understand how strong Sabo was after all.
It could be said that I didn't really need to understand it.

"But… Sabo was…"
"That woman who fought against the young lady was certainly strong, but for someone to exceed Sabo…"

Sabo's party members are surprised as well.
The remaining party members are now four people.

"I, Gozer of the Harz duchy's order of knights, testify that this was a fair duel. There may be no retaliation for this outcome."

Gozer instructs Sabo's party members.
Should I say something?
The follow up is important.
I don't want to worry about them coming for revenge.

"The circumstances were unavoidable because it was a duel. Please don't hold a grudge against me."
"Ah, yes, I understand. I don't intend to cause a dispute with someone who defeated Sabo. But, the equipment."
"The equipment?"

I thought there might be problems, but there won't be a grudge?
Leaving them the equipment is better than causing them to want revenge.

"The equipment of someone defeated belongs to the winner. However, they don't often take it. Some people challenge others to duels to get equipment, especially if there are strong emotions from having equipment taken from you."

Sherry tells me.

The equipment belongs to the winner.
Therefore there are people who duel to get equipment.
To show that I am not like that, I should leave the equipment.
It seems a little confusing.

"Roxanne, what do you think?"
"I don't really have a grudge."
"We don't need the equipment."

I informed the other party members after hearing Roxanne's answer.
Though Sabo had equipment with skills, this is for the best.
There might be retaliation if I take the equipment.

"Thank you… we'll take the equipment and intelligence card home, we leave disposal of the remains to you."
"I understand."
"Thank you very much."

The party members thanked me, and spoke to Gozer.
The remains are unnecessary?

Thinking about it, not even bones are left when you die in the labyrinth either.
It's common thought to just let it fade away.

But, they are taking the intelligence card with them.
It's better proof than a lock of hair to show that someone has died.

I thought about being appointed village chief Lv1 by a knight so I could check the hand, but I don't need to do it.
Maybe when they check the intelligence card they can see what happened in their mind.
Maybe show the fight, but I don't think that's possible.

"Ok, this way."

Gozer leads us.
The leftover work is for the order of knights, and we are led into the castle.

"Master, I'm sorry."

Roxanne apologizes when we arrive in the lobby.

"It's alright. It's my fault for wanting the draw."
"But…"
"It's fine."
"Ok."

Maybe Roxanne is just as shocked as I am today.
It's not something we should worry about.

"I was quite surprised Michio. What did you do to the opponent? Even I don't understand it. The opponents sacrificial misanga was cut, so there must have been at least two attacks. I didn't think you were just an average adventurer, but that was quite something."

Gozer is amazed.
Not an average adventurer, I'm not even an adventurer.
I seem to be admired?

"He was a formidable opponent. If I had done any less it might have become dangerous."

“That woman, Roxanne, also made a show of overwhelming ability. Before the other party comes out, please leave early for today. I was here by chance, but the duke is away today. We will have a detailed discussion about this next time.”

I’m not looking forward to next time.
There’s no way out of it.
For now, I go home.

“Roxanne, are you alright?”

As soon as we arrived at the house, I spoke to Roxanne.
Roxanne is probably in the most shock.

“Yes. I’m alright. Um, what that woman said, don’t worry about it.”
“About the weak man? I’m not worried about that.”

Things like that happen.

“That. Well. About me leading a man around by the nose.”
“I don’t mind.”

I say so, and smile.
It’s a false accusation, though it might be true that the eyes of men looking at Roxanne change.

Roxanne also smiles.
I watch her face.
Are you alright?

That night after going to bed, I heard Roxanne.

“I’ve probably caused trouble for my aunt’s family.”

As the four of us lay there, Roxanne mutters.
Roxanne was a burden for her aunt’s house.
That woman prevented income from going to the aunts house.

Are you worried after all?
It’s not something you should worry about.

“Forget about today.”
“When my uncle approved of me becoming a slave, he added a

condition with the slave trader that I could not be sold to members of the wolf tribe. Even though he was a mean uncle, that was to protect me I think."

If that woman was annoyed with Roxanne to the end, she probably would have bought Roxanne after she became a slave.
Though the uncle reluctantly sold Roxanne, he took strategic precautions.
This may have been the circumstance that Alan the slave trader mentioned.
If there is a condition for not selling to the wolf tribe, you can't sell her at an auction where anyone might buy her.

"If I think about it, I should express my gratitude to that woman. Without her it wouldn't have been possible for me to buy Roxanne, so my thanks to her. So don't worry about things too much."
"Yes. Thank you."
"You and I just have to be happy. It's the best revenge against that woman."

That's a proverb from somewhere in Spain.
Living happily is the best revenge.

I lightly embrace Roxanne with one arm, and draw her close.
Roxanne silently lays her head on me.
Her head is on my shoulder.
While feeling the weight, I fell asleep.

Chapter 106 - Waste

Next evening. When we return home, there was a note left by Luke the broker.
It should be a good news.
I hope it's not a bad news.

It can't be a summon from the Duke for the message arrived today.
It should be from yesterday, not today.

Had the message arrived tomorrow, it would have been highly likely for it to be the Duke's.
Even more so had it arrived the day after tomorrow.
Within four to five days, the Duke will surely send a summon.
Even if it's today, there's no problem.

It was a good idea to return home before going for shopping.
Is this what you call premonition?
Nope. It's not premonition, it's desire.

Not facing the problem is not the solution to the problem.
Even if ten days will have passed after the duel, the Duke will investigate if he finds even a minor detail that appears suspicious.
It will be really funny if that comes to pass.

Oh well, the business in ten days' time can be take care of in ten days' time. I should first take care of today's business.
Luke contacts me mostly in case of successful bid.

The Duke's message will take long to reach Luke.
And then Luke's message will take a few days to reach me.
Even If it's the Duke's message, I'll just visit Luke first.
I'll hear the story from Luke before visiting the Duke.
All of this will take around ten days.

"Master, there seemed to be a successful bid for Caterpillar Monster Card."

Roxanne reads Luke's message out.

I'm unusually cautious today but Roxanne seems to be her usual self. Let alone today, even if I received such a shock yesterday, I wouldn't be this calm.

As usual, she dodged attacks from monsters with little movement.
There's a possibility that she's not as calm inside as she appears outside.
This possibility is frightening, so I won't think much about it.

"It's still bright outside, so I can make it there in time. I'll head to the merchants guild.
"Very well. Miria and I will do maintenance of the equipment then. There are enough vegetables to make soup. As for dinner, can you please take Sherry with you to buy ingredients?"
"That's fine with me."
"Whole fish, desu!"

Like Miria said, tonight's dinner will be whole fish tatsuta-age.
I have already left the whole fish to marinate in fish sauce.

I jump to the merchants guild with Sherry.
I buy the Caterpillar Monster Card.
There was no message from the Duke after all.
Alright!

"Let's make one more dish for dinner? Miria will eat most of the fish by herself."
"That's right. Then I'll stir-fry something."

After buying bread and ingredients for stir-fried food, we head back home.
I hand the Caterpillar Monster Card and a misanga with an empty skill slot to Sherry.
Sherry fuses the card casually.

"Amazing. It's at your fingertips now. As you would expect from Sherry."
"As expected of Sherry."
"Wow, desu."
"This will be for Miria."

I pat Miria who was admiring Sherry.
I play with her cat ears.
With Sherry having successfully fused the Caterpillar Monster Card, we now have four Sacrificial Misanga.
All the members of our party have a Sacrificial Misanga now.

“Okay, desu.”
“Alright then, Miria, where do you want to wear it? Ankle?”
“Thank you, desu.”

I have Miria sit on a chair.
I wrap the misanga around her foot and tie it.
I haven’t withdrawn the instruction to Luke of buying Caterpillar Monster Cards.
We will have more members in our party. Also, we need spare ones in case existing ones break.

Later, I fry the whole fish.
It can no longer be called whole fish, however, since it has been sliced into several pieces.
While I was frying the fish, Miria was beside me the whole time.
She stepped back only when oil splashed.

“Oil may splash again.”
“Splash, desu.”
“I think we need an apron.”

Apron exists in this world.
However, it’s for the purpose of safety at work. It barely qualifies as an apron. It’s not true to the essence of the word ‘apron’.
Its fabric is thick, safety being the reason.
I can put it on myself but I can’t stand Roxanne and other girls wearing it.

I want Roxanne to wear a pretty apron.
That’s right. It’s a dream of every man.
A dream of every man.
Because it was an important thing, I said it twice.

“Apron? I think it would be better to have one.”
“It’s just that there are no pretty aprons.”

“That’s right.”

Roxanne seems to agree with me.
I want fashionable aprons for them.
There is a frilled apron attached to the maid outfit but it can’t be detached.
Even though you’re only a step away, you hit a wall; it’s the same feeling.

Well, they’re not full-time housewives, so it can’t be helped.
In this world, those who wear pretty clothes don’t cook.
And those who cook can’t afford to wear pretty clothes.
Considering this, it is highly unlikely for pretty aprons to be sold.

“Then let’s visit the clothing store in the Imperial Capital and have it tailored.”
“Umm… are you sure?”
“I want Roxanne to wear pretty clothes.”
“Okay, thank you very much.”

For now, I fry the whole fish without apron.
When the dark tatsuta-age was ready, I put it in the dish.

“Alright, let’s start eating.”
“Yes, desu!”

When I bring the dish to the table and sit down on a chair, Miria leans forward.
Miria watches me closely as I put the first piece of the whole fish into my mouth.

Under the crispy layer of slime starch is the juicy whole fish.
When my teeth bite through the crispy texture into the soft meat, I feel a burst of heat.
The spicy taste of fish sauce spreads around my mouth.
It melts on my tongue.

Delicious!
It is more delicious than I imagined.
I give it three-stars.
Because it’s near perfection.

“Delicious.”
“Every food which Master makes is great but this one is the best.”
“This is amazing.”
“Delicious, fish, not eat, desu.”

Does she mean that she has never eaten such a delicious fish?
Miria seems to be pleased.

Tatsuta-age vanishes quickly.
Not just Miria, even Roxanne and Sherry hold their platters out for more.
But when only a little was left, they hold themselves back.

Miria, however, is still at it.
When only one piece was left, I reach out for the dish.
Can I please eat it?

“Miria can have it.”
“Okay, desu!”

When I decline it, Miria gleefully stuffs the last piece of tatsuta-age into her mouth.
She moves her jaws slowly.
When she was finished eating, she droops her shoulders.

Ah, I understand how she feels.
Well, it was just that delicious.

“We will have next celebration when we break through Haruba’s 15th floor.”
“Eat, desu!”

When I announce that, her eyes brighten up.
With this, she will show enthusiasm in the labyrinth.

Next day. We visit the clothing store in the Imperial Capital.
It’s a shop that sells gorgeous outfits for women.
But there are no aprons being sold.
Apron doesn’t seem to be an item which can be put on display in such a shop.

“I need an apron, preferably made of thin fabric, which can be put on

while cooking.”
“Apron?”
“It should cover only the front. It should have a strap as well, so it can be tied around the back. It should also have frills like the apron in imperial maid outfit.”
“Oh”

I ask the same male attendant from earlier whom I asked about maid outfit for Miria.
He should understand what type of apron I’m talking about.
Still, the splendor of apron is unimaginable even if you know about maid outfits.
You need to be a connoisseur.

“Is it possible?”
“Which fabric would you like? If you want thin fabric, silk would be better if you ask me.”
“It will get stained a lot. I need a fabric that can be easily washed.”

Silk apron, huh?
I don’t think it would be better, however.

“Because we will have to design it from the scratch, additional cost will be charged. It will not be much more than the cost of fabric, though. Apron made of ordinary fabric will cost you 1,000 Nars while the one made of silk will cost you 1,300 Nars.”
“Hmm… so there’s such a thing.”

It’s quite high.
Is that so because I’m commissioning a custom order?
It goes even higher if I choose silk.

“Which color would you like? We can arrange for a color that matches the sheen of silk.”
“White will be fine.”

He’s persistent.

“White would be great, indeed. White would look great with the sheen of silk.”

Color and fabric are secondary to me.

“It would?”
“Just imagine. Body wrapped from chest to knees in smooth silk. Silk that is soft to touch and glossy in appearance. We promise you the best possible article.”

S-Stupid.
Does he think that I don’t know?

I know how a silk apron looks and feels like.

Such a thing as silk apron.
It’s expensive but I place the order.

“Can you please make both an ordinary one and a silk one for the three of them?”
“Certainly. May I have the measurements then?”
“Thank you very much.”

Roxanne thanks me and then goes ahead with a female attendant.

“Shoulder straps shall be decorated with frills. Hem shall be decorated with lace. If there is anything else, please specify. It will be ready in five days.”

This man knows it after all.
I have been beaten squarely.

I pay 30% discounted sum of 4,830 Nars.
It’s quite an expense.
Although it’s not a sum that is painful to pay,
I want to save as much money as I can for upcoming auction.

Next day. Another situation arises that requires me to part with money.
When we drop by the weapons shop, a lot of weapons were lined up in the inner part of the shop.
The inner part of the shop exhibits high-tier equipment.
There were not many equipment exhibited in the inner part of the shop till today.

“There seemed to be a large shipment.”
“Yes, we received a lot of equipment from a certain family.”

Wholesale, huh?
If you sell in bulk, you can receive a large sum immediately.
I'm envious.

"There are many estocs. Do you want to have a look?"
"Sure. Thank you."

Estoc | One-handed Sword
Skills | Empty | Empty | Empty | Empty

Hmm…
I find an estoc with four empty skill slots.
I was able to find such an estoc because there was a bulk of it.
Rapier can have a maximum of three empty skill slots. Four seems to be the limit for estoc.

"What do you say, Roxanne?"
"Umm… are you sure?"
"Have a look."
"O-Okay."

I hand the estoc to Roxanne.

The number of empty skill slots is same as two-handed counterpart, Damascus steel sword. Is the performance on the same level, too?
To replace Durandal, I need [Incantation Interruption] at minimum along with [HP Absorption] and [MP Absorption].

There are a few Damascus steel spears but they don't have any empty skill slot on them.
I look at Sherry and shake my head.

"Okay."

Replies Sherry.
She seems to have understood the underlying meaning.

There are a few staves as well. They seem to have empty skill slots.
Among those with empty skill slots, there's an exquisite piece of equipment.
Furthermore, it's a Staff of Offerings with [2x Increase in Intelligence] skill. It's an upgrade to my current equipment.

Staff of Offerings is the weapon which Cassia uses.
Same weapon as Cassia, huh?
That's a must.

"It seems to be a good weapon."

Roxanne passes the estoc back to me.
I purchase the staff and the estoc.
Gold coins fly away like birds with newly grown wings.
It's painful to see.

After we were done at the weapons shop, we head to the armor shop.
There was nothing new at the armor shop.
Did they sell only weapons?

"Did they not sell any armor?"
"So you have heard already. You have good ears."

The armor merchant overhears me muttering to myself.
He sidles up to me while rubbing his hands.
So they sold armors after all.

"Kinda."
"I have indeed received some stock. I haven't put it on display yet. It's in the back of the shop. Do you want to check it out?"
"Can I?"
"Yes. Here, please."

The armor merchant leads me to the back of the shop. (TN: Never go to the back of a shop with a stranger.)
I enter the inner part of the shop from behind the counter.
There were many equipment lined up.

"There's quite a number of equipment."
"I purchased these equipment just today."
"Were the equipment sold by a certain family?"
"Apparently. It's impossible to get a hold of a bulk of such good equipment otherwise. The family was quite influential but it seems to have met its end. They were gaining influence through force but the reckless use of force proved to be their undoing. The strongest man

of the family seems to have died. There's a rumor that he was killed in a duel."

Duel?
I think I have heard this story somewhere.

"Killed?"
"Now that they are no longer strong, they are paying for their domineering attitude. They seemed to have raised a lot of funds through debts but they never repaid those debts and kept pushing the date of repayment forcibly. The debts have now grown enormous."

That's harsh.
So it was their attitude in general.
I thought their attitude toward Roxanne stemmed from their enmity toward her.

Well, I must thank Baradam family for these equipment, at least.
There's a Damascus steel forehead protector with four empty skill slots and a dragon leather jacket with three empty skill slots.

"This is?"
"It's alba."
"This piece of clothing increases magic power and greatly increases magic defense. It's an equipment for priests, monks and wizards."

Alba seems to be a body equipment. This one has two empty skill slots.
It's my first time seeing this equipment.
The armor merchant told me the name of the equipment while Sherry explained the rest.

"It's made of holy silver. Because making it requires expansive use of holy silver, it is considered high-tier equipment and is rarely available in market. Equipment such as loafers are focused on fashion but this one is focused on performance. Because magic defense is great to have against monsters that use magic attacks, even those who don't have magic-based jobs use this equipment."

The armor merchant is trying to sell its features.

Increase in magic power is indeed attractive.
There are empty skill slots as well.

Also, there are dragon leather shoes and dragon leather gloves with one empty skill slot.
One empty skill slot is not much but I decide to buy them in the end.
It’s a rare opportunity.
Once I have monster cards fused with them, they’ll be even better.

Therefore, it’s not a waste.
It’s an investment.
Even though tens of gold coins have vanished just like that.

Chapter 107 - Raising Funds

Currently, I have one green magic crystal and one yellow magic crystal at hand.
The green magic crystal is the one I have been working on.
Because I have been accumulating magic in this crystal for a long time now, it will likely turn yellow by the auction.

The yellow magic crystal is the result of merging the magic crystals we obtained from Heinz's gang.
I have no idea as to how much magic has been accumulated in this crystal because it belonged to the thieves.
It may contain magic equivalent to 200,000 monsters or it may contain magic equivalent to 900,000 monsters.
If I can accumulate magic in this crystal equivalent to 1,000,000 monsters, it will turn into white magic crystal which can be sold for a million Nars. Whether I can do that before the auction or not, there's no knowing. It's a gamble.

A guaranteed 100,000 Nars or a probable 1,000,000 Nars?
For now, I enter the enter the labyrinth with yellow magic crystal and start accumulating magic.
Should I change it?
Green magic crystal can easily be turned yellow before the auction and sold for 100,000 Nars but I'm not sure if I can turn yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal and earn a million Nars before the auction.

Not necessarily. I can merge the magic crystals into one.
If the yellow magic crystal doesn't turn white by the auction, I can merge the crystals into one.
If I had just merged all the crystals into one and worked on yellow magic crystal, it would have turned white by now.

There are still some days left till the auction.
I can definitely earn more money.
If I can't turn the yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal before the auction, I can just sell the green magic crystal turned yellow for

100,000 Nars. If I feel the need for 1,000,000 Nars, I can merge the crystals into one and then aim for white crystal.
There's another option. Selling two yellow crystals for 200,000 Nars, that is.

The more the options, the better.
Which means working on green magic crystal is wise.
After the green magic crystal turns yellow, I should leave it as is.
If the yellow magic crystal doesn't turn white before the auction, I can either sell it for 100,000 Nars or I can work exclusively on it. It's better to work on it exclusively rather than selling it.

There's one more problem and that's skill.
Currently, I have my bonus points invested in experience based skills.
As a result, I had to neglect [Crystallization].
If I intend to earn more money before the auction by selling magic crystals, I have to invest bonus points in [Crystallization].

Auction is held four times a year.
If there's a chance, I have to grab it.
And to do that, I have to make sure that I'm fully prepared.
I want to become an adventurer as quickly as possible but the situation demands otherwise.

The policy has been decided.
I replace [Increase in Gained Experience] with [Crystallization 64x].
I equip alba and challenge Haruba's 15th floor.

If earning money is the objective, there's one more option. And that is to farm whole fish on Bode's 12th floor.
But there's no need to go to that extent.
On 16th floor, the maximum number of monsters in a group will increase to five. To accumulate magic quickly in the magic crystals; the higher the floor, the better.

One monster will give me magic equivalent to 64 monsters.

Kaga Michio | Male | 17 years old
Explorer Lv42 | Hero Lv38 | Wizard Lv41 | Monk Lv41
Equipment | Rod of Offerings | Hard Leather Hat | Alba | Dragon

Leather Gloves | Dragon Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | Female | 16 years old
Warrior Lv26
Equipment | Estoc | Steel Shield | Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Dragon Leather Jacket | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes of Willow | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | Female | 16 years old
Master Smith Lv32
Equipment | Steel Spear of Power | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail | Water Resistant Leather Mittens | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Miria | Female | 15 years old
Diver Lv31
Equipment | Rapier | Iron Shield | Strengthened Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Alba is a knee-length outfit.
An outfit that you can see a father in a church wearing.
And it's white. It looks like I'm wearing an apron.

I try to fight with the alba equipped.
I finish Sarracenia in three [Fire Ball]s after having taken out Bitch Butterflies in five [Breeze Storm]s.
Because the number of attacks required has decreased, it has been ascertained that alba increases magic power.
It doesn't make it easy but it does make it easier.

Only an upgrade alone doesn't reduce the duration of battle.
I must be grateful that an equipment which is not even a weapon was able to, albeit little, increase my magic power.

"I look totally like a wizard now."
"That's right. I will have to be more careful with guiding to the monsters."
"Isn't it useless to use rod now?"

You don't see many adventurers and explorers wearing an alba.

I should better be careful.
I will have to depend on Roxanne more than ever.

“Priests and monks wear it, too.”

Like Sherry said, I can deceive people as a priest or a monk.
As long as I don’t encounter Gozer or other members of the order of knights, there will be no problem.
I should better not head outside of the labyrinth with the alba equipped.

Alba is light and can be tied around the waist with a strap. It doesn’t hinder movement.
Even if I use Durandal with the alba equipped, there will be no sense of incongruity.

“Although a monk using a sword looks odd, a monk fighting as a vanguard is fine, right?”
“Yes. Because the more the firepower in attack, the better.”

Roxanne confirms.
That party size is restricted to six, it is not a good idea to reserve a place for healer.
Even a monk can go berserk with a sword, no?

I try staff, too. As expected, the effect of [2x Increase in Intelligence] skill isn’t much different from my Rod of Offerings.

We shortly reach the boss room of Haruba’s 15th floor.
Because the duration of battle has shortened?
Or because of Miria’s enthusiasm?

“So, what kind of monster is Bitch Butterfly boss?”
“Madame Butterfly. It’s basically stronger version of Bitch Butterfly. The chance of paralysis is higher, so we need to be cautious.”

Sherry briefs while we enter the boss room.
Because we never broke through 16th floor of Quratar’s labyrinth, this is our first time fighting against Bitch Butterfly boss.

“xxxxxxxxxx”

Roxanne translates it to Miria.
Teaching her one word at a time is taking long.
Miria has to get familiar with Brahim quickly.

When we enter the boss room, two monsters appear.
A Bitch Butterfly and a Madame Butterfly.
Madame Butterfly has a large eye pattern on its wings.
It looks more like a moth than a butterfly.

There is not much hair on its body.
However, there's long hair growing around the eye pattern. It looks like eyelashes.
The eyelashes are fascinating. Just like a 'madame'.

Also, there's distinct bluish-black eye-line.
Truly a 'madame'.
As far as the eye pattern is concerned, it looks really like a 'madame'.

Because it's a monster, however, it must be pushed down.
I take the accompanying Bitch Butterfly out swiftly and join the attack on the Madame Butterfly.
I attack it cautiously.
I will get paralyzed if I receive Madame Butterfly's attack.

Well, there's no way for Roxanne to make such a blunder.
I carefully connect it with Durandal from behind.

Oops

Madame Butterfly swings its large wing.
Its wing covers the entire area.
I lower my head to dodge it.
Because I was careful, I was able to dodge it.

Miria seems to be fine, too.
There's no need to be worried about Roxanne.
Sherry nudges with her spear from a distance, so she should be fine as well.
Everyone seems to be safe.

We switch back to attack.

Our group of four takes the monster out.
Madame Butterfly drops down.
It turns into smoke and dissipates.

“Magic crystal, desu!”

Miria cries excitedly.
Is there really a magic crystal?
I can’t see it but [Appraisal] shows a magic crystal. Miria runs to the magic crystal.

Miria grabs the magic crystal, not the dropped item, and brings it over to me.
It’s a black magic crystal.
How did she notice something that appeared out of nowhere?

“As expected of Miria. Well done.”
“Yes, desu.”

I lightly pat Miria’s head.
It’s unfortunate that I can’t play with her cat ears because she has a hat on.

“Which reminds me, we previously found a magic crystal in a boss room. Are magic crystals easily found in boss rooms?”
“In a boss room, the position where a boss appears is fixed. Also, boss monsters possess more magic.”

Sherry explains.
Respawn point is fixed, indeed.
Because respawn point is fixed, the place where the boss collapses is nearby. It helps the magic to build up at the same point.

The magic of boss monsters is more, huh?
I was of the idea that the rate at which the magic accumulates in a magic crystal is same for every monster but it doesn’t seem to be the case.
Should I undertake another experiment?

“Can we fight against this boss once more?”

After arriving at 16th floor, we retreat back to 15th floor.

When I checked my backpack, the green magic crystal had turned yellow.
This green magic crystal turned yellow in just one day.
As expected, the effect of [Crystallization 64x] is considerable.

Or perhaps it had already accumulated enough magic until now?
With [Crystallization 64x], I will have to kill just 157 monsters to accumulate magic equivalent to 10,000 monsters.
At this rate, white magic crystal doesn't seem to be a far cry.

"It's yellow already. As expected of Master."
"Thank you."

I put the black magic crystal, which Miria found, in my backpack and put the yellow magic cystal in my Item Box.
I put the newly formed yellow magic crystal carefully in the innermost part of the Item Box.
I have two yellow magic crystals. They may appear same but they are completely different.
I don't want to make a goofy mistake of forgetting which one is which.

I reduce [Crystallization] to 32x and defeat the boss again.
As to why I didn't keep it at 64x that's because there are two monsters to take out in the boss room.
After I take the accompanying Sarracenia out, we finish the Madame Butterfly.

I drop my backpack and check the magic crystal inside.
The crystal had turned purple from red.

"Purple magic crystal already? It's absurd as always."

Sherry is surprised.

"Like Sherry said, the boss seems to possess more magic."
"I did say that defeating one boss is equivalent to defeating many monsters but to get a purple magic crystal by defeating just one boss…"
"It's to be expected of Master."
"Amazing, desu."

“Well, this much is nothing.”

I grab the straw provided to me by Roxanne.
Although I defeated two monsters with [Crystallization 32x], it accumulated magic equivalent to 100 monsters.
It means a boss possesses over twice the magic of a normal monster.

If we assume that Madame Butterfly possessed twice the magic of Sarracenia, then it should have accumulated magic equivalent to 96 monsters with [Crystallization 32x].
However, if magic of 4 monsters was already accumulated in the black magic crystal, which Miria found, then it’s possible for it to turn purple with magic of 96 monsters.

Further investigation will be bothersome.
I can do it but not now.
As to how much magic Madame Butterfly possesses compared to normal monsters, it can be accurately calculated.
If magic equivalent to 100 monsters can be accumulated, I can keep on killing boss monsters until the magic crystal turns white.

Wait a minute. When you kill 100 monsters, does the crystal turn blue or purple?
There is no such level as 30 monsters or more.
Even if there is, I won’t bother testing it.
In any case, turning the yellow magic crystal into white magic crystal before the auction seems to be possible with [Crystallization 64x].

“Haa…”
“So, which monster appears on Haruba’s 16th floor?”
“Ah, umm… the monster native to Haruba’s 16th floor is Clamshell. It does not use poison attack but its attack may inflict paralysis. It also splashes water as long-range attack. It’s not water magic, however. It’s considered physical attack. It also has digestive property. It’s resistant to fire magic. Earth magic is its weakness.”

Sherry briefs with dissenting expression.

“Shell powder, was it?”
“Correct.”

The item dropped by Clamshell is shell powder.
I won't have to buy it from now on.

"They are resistant to fire magic like Bitch Butterflies. This is 16th floor, however, so we have to avoid Sarracenias. Roxanne, search for places with few monsters."
"Understood."

I ask of Roxanne to guide us.
Fire magic is the weakness of Sarracenias while Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells are resistant to fire magic.
If there are more Sarracenias, we will have to finish them first but that will make things difficult.
Because Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells are resistant to fire magic, the overall battle will be longer.

Onward from 16th floor, the maximum number of monsters in a group is five.
Ideally, there should be no more than two Sarracenias in a group.
Roxanne can take on one of them. Because there will be one more, there's a chance of receiving attack.
But the duration of battle will be shorter.

However, Sarracenia is native to 14th floor of Haruba's labyrinth. Because there's a difference of two floors, there shouldn't be too many Sarracenias here.
Even if there are Sarracenias in a group, they should be in minority.
We shouldn't face much trouble.

"Umm… Pig Hogs are resistant to earth magic."

Sherry points out.
They are?
We encounter a group of three Clamshells and two Pig Hogs.

It's my job to consider various combinations and appropriate magic.
Similarly, Roxanne's job is to guide us to suitable locations.
Roxanne's job is difficult.

Chapter 108 - Clamshell

The Clamshell is a bivalve demon. TN: bivalve is the term for something with two shells… I think.
It's about one meter in size.
It's small for a demon, but quite large for a bivalve.
If Roxanne stood on one naked, it would be a true Birth of Venus.
TN: Birth of Venus is a painting by Sandro Botticelli from the 1480's.

Even though it's large, it doesn't wave.
It's quite plain.
I was expecting a large tongue.

It's not on it's side, but standing upright.
Despite being a bivalve.
It's a mystery how it stands upright without any feet.
How it moves is also a mystery.

It moves towards us while standing.
It's speed is about average.
Since earth magic is it's weakness, I use [Sand ball].
The Clamshell approaches, and Roxanne takes the front.

There is only one demon, and Sherry is to the side using her spear to pierce it.
Miria is to the other side.
I have a position between Miria and Roxanne.

The Clamshell makes a charge, and is deflected by Roxanne's shield.
Next, it's mouth opens up and it spits out water.
Roxanne tilts her upper body and avoids it.

There's also an attack like that?
It would hit me.
It's good I'm to the side a bit.

The shell moves again, and the mouth opens wide.
It jumps towards Roxanne like that.

It tries to sandwich her in it’s two shells.

Roxanne pierces it with her Estoc, and then dodges it calmly.
After avoiding the shellfish, she pierces it again.
She has plenty of room.

I was scared and stayed back a little.
I was at a diagonal position in the back.

“It bites?”

Being sandwiched by a one meter bivalve.
It might be considerably powerful.

“It seems so.”

Roxanne answers like it’s nothing to worry about.

“Even though the library book said there was a good chance of being paralyzed if you are bitten, I think being paralyzed might be a certainty after witnessing it.”
“If the movement is large, it won’t be able to hit easily.”

There it is.
Sherry & I share a glance.
Roxanne is ahead of everyone at being able to do these things in the heat of battle.

I use a fifth [Sand ball].
Isn’t it defeated with five?
I used a sixth shot… but the Clamshell was defeated before it.

“Oh, it’s defeated.”
“I did it.”

The bivalve falls to the floor of the cave.
Sherry’s spear seems to have been the last nail in it’s coffin.
It became smoke and disappeared.

“You did it, Sherry.”
“It’s amazing, desu.”
“Thank you. I think it was largely because Roxanne pierced the inside of it when it’s mouth was open, and because it’s an aquatic

demon Miria's power might have been strong as well."

Sherry is pleased.
It's the first time Sherry defeated a demon I tried to use magic on.
Roxanne's weapon has changed to the estoc and our offensive ability has increased.

"Is there extra damage from attacking the inside?"

I confirmed it with Sherry.

"The hard shell didn't show much damage after our attacks, so I think so."
"Ah, I see."

It seems like a good thought.
It's not a demon I understand well.

There are various differences when Sherry defeats a demon.
If I don't deliver the final blow, [64x crystallization] does not work.
[Increase acquired experience] is also a skill I have.
If I don't deliver the final blow, there might be no bonus to experience.

Sometimes there's just no helping it however.
Even if I don't finish it, we might get the experience because my magic did most of the work.

Sherry attacked about 4-5 times.
With three people it would be about 12 times.
Sometimes it's going to happen.
It would be crazy to demand that they don't attack.

We take on a group next.
There are three Clamshell's, and one Bitch Butterfly.

"It's coming."

Roxanne calls out.
Roxanne moves her body slightly.
Water goes past in the position her upper body was in.

It doesn't seem to be magic, but cannot be blocked by the shield.

Getting wet is also unpleasant, so evading it is better than trying to deal with it.

It's good that I'm not right behind Roxanne.
I've been seeing battles for a while.
I can foresee the danger of being behind Roxanne.
Even I am learning every day.

The Clamshells and Bitch Butterfly approach.
The Clamshells come forward after shooting water without delay.
It is neither magic or a skill that they use to shoot water.
There is no delay because they don't need to use a magic formation?

There is a three person vanguard against the four of them.
I defeated the Clamshell's with six [Sand storm]'s.
This isn't one of the times where I can defeat them all in the same number of shots.

I need to use another three [Breeze ball]'s to defeat the Bitch Butterfly.
Magic is the decisive blow this time.
Three people pick up the dropped items.
Miria passes me Shell Powder at the end.

"Here, desu"
"A clam is a bivalve, is this where the clam ingredient comes from?"
"Yes, it's an item from the Clamshell. It's a rare item, but doesn't seem to be as rare as whole fish."

Sherry tells me.
It's like that afterall?
Miria seems to want to say something.

"The clam is dinner tonight, and tomorrow's dinner will be deep fried whole fish."
"Tomorrow's dinner, desu."

I'm not sure if she's happy or upset.
She might be pleased.
She might be upset that it's not til tomorrow.

The fish needs time to marinate in the fish sauce.

“Next, please lead us to a place with three kinds of demons.”
“I understand. I know the smell of a group with 3 Clamshells and 1 Bitch Butterfly, I’ll do my best to find a group like that with a third demon type as well.”
“Please do.”

As expected, Roxanne is reliable.
There can be a maximum group of 5 demons on the 16th floor.
There are three kinds of demons, and the maximum group size is 5.
With all three demons, there would only be one of the other demon type.
That’s how things would turn out with this combination.

Some estimations can’t be made in a two to one combination.
Like if there were two sarracenia and one other kind of demon.

“Um, I think I’ve found a group with 3 Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and a Pig Hog. How is that?”
“Clamshell and Pig Hog together? We should try that out.”
“I understand, this way.”

A group with three kinds of demons on Haruba’s 16th floor. Three Clammshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and Pig Hog.
I use six earth spells on the Clamshells, after that the Bitch Butterfly falls from another three wind spells, and then the Pig Hog falls last from an additional three [Water ball]’s.
It’s a considerably long fight.
It’s quite serious.

“Three [Water ball]’s… We should avoid this combination as much as possible.”
“Is that so?”

No matter if I use it or not, the amount of spells needed doesn’t seem to change while using Monk.
I won’t stop using Cook, because I want clams.

Next is a group of 3 different kinds of demons made up by 3 Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly, and a Sarracenia.

I use six earth spells on the Clamshells, after that the Bitch Butterfly falls from another three wind spells, and finally the Sarracenia falls from one fire spell.

“Is this combination alright?”
“Yes, there’s no problem with this one.”

For Roxanne, nothing seems like a problem.
However, prolonged combat is a serious problem.
Roxanne isn’t the only one fighting, so there are other things to consider.

I used [Meteor Crash].
If they have fire resistance, it might not defeat them. My expectations are off though, because the Clamshells are defeated with a single [Meteor Crash].
Why is that?
Does [Meteor Crash] have the earth attribute?

Earth magic is a weakness of the Ma Bream on the 12th floor.
I haven’t tested if [Meteor Crash] can defeat them in a single blow.
I’ll have to test out [Meteor Crash] a bit more.

Miria seems worried, so we finish up on Haruba’s 16th floor for now and head to Bode’s 12th floor.
We hunted until we got two whole fish.
I got them as our celebration of our passing of the 15th floor.

“Is two whole fish enough?”
“Yes, desu.”
“It’s good.”

Miria seems to think two is enough.
It might be too much.
There’s the possibility of getting tired of it quickly.
Though it might be too delicious for that.

We returned to Haruba’s 16th floor.
I’m using [Fifth job] so I can use both Cook and Monk at the same time.

Since there are up to five enemies, we should have Monk.

Even Roxanne might get hit if there are five.
It would be troublesome to switch to Monk after someone is hit, so it should be ready in case of an emergency.

I've had to sacrifice a lot of my experience gain because I still want to keep [64x crystallization].
There's no other choice.
I have to keep doing it until I have a white crystal ready for the auction.
If I get clams in large quantities, I can make a profit selling them as well.

The soup I made for dinner was clam chowder, which I hadn't had in a long time.
It is still delicious.
Roxanne, Sherry and Miria also think it is delicious to eat.

"Yes, desu."

Miria doesn't seem to have remembered the brahim word for clam yet.
Even this morning, all she said was "here" when passing the clams she had picked up.

"It's a clam. Clam."
"Clam, desu."

Even if she says it, she'll probably forget it straight away.
Should I relate it to fish?
It's a good combination to have the taste of fish and clam together.
TN: Scene change, gooo!

"I made macaroni for breakfast this morning, and I'd like some soup later."
"Okay."
"I'll make the soup."

We make our plans after leaving the labyrinth.
Sherry will make the soup.

White meat, clams, pig ribs, lots of vegetables, and macaroni
The macaroni has seafood sauce as a topping.

I bought bread as well, so there might be too many ingredients.

“It’s delicious. The clam is very delicious.”
“Yes. Master’s cooking is the best.”
“Very tasty, desu.”

Clam soup goes well with the white meat.
Miria won’t have any complaints about this.

“White meat is delicious, desu.”

Ok, I was wrong.
If there is fish involved, Miria won’t notice anything else.

“What is this?”

I try asking near the end of the day.

“Shell powder, desu.”

Since shell powder was used in the tempura, she seems to have memorized it.

“And this?”
“Clam, desu.”

Oh!
You remembered it?

“I ate it with white meat this morning.”
“That’s right.”

It seems it wasn’t useless.
Is this the best way for Miria to learn brahim?

We leave the labyrinth and head back home.
There’s a message from Luke waiting when we get back.

It’s the thing I was afraid of.
It’s quicker than I thought.
Some time has passed, and the call from the Duke has come.

“Master, he seems to have made a successful bid for a butterfly monster card.”

Roxanne reads the memo.
It seems I'm alright, even after several days.
The message is just here because of my successful bid?
Butterfly monster card.

"What skill does butterfly monster card give?"
"It adds a wind attribute to attacks if put on a weapon, and resistance to wind if put on protective equipment."
"Something like the mermaid monster card?"
"Yes."

I confirmed it with Sherry.
Mermaid monster card is the one we used to make the waterproof leather mittens.
Mermaid monster card adds the water attribute, and this adds the wind attribute.

Cassia had resistance to the four elements on her equipment.
I should make something like that.
I have 4 empty skill slots on my damascus steel forehead protector.
I could add resistance to all four elements on one piece of equipment.

"I'll use it on my damascus steel forehead protector. Does it fuse with a kobold monster card?"
"It does. It will make the effect stronger, and make the equipment useful for a long time if it's damascus steel."

Sherry is positive.
She hasn't failed in fusing anything so far.
She's finally got confidence.
It's a good trend.

"Are there only four attributes that can be added with monster cards."
"Yes, as far as I know."

The same as the wizards four attributes?

"Okay, we'll add all four to my damascus steel forehead protector."
"What?"

Sherry stops.
I thought we were going smoothly.

“There wasn’t much progress in the research for multiple skills? It should be fine, we won’t overlap any effects.”
“Um…”
“Don’t worry about it. If it doesn’t work, it doesn’t work.”
“Ah…”

It’s hard to test if it has an effect.
I was able to test plating by applying it to a demon and watching the effect.
It would be difficult to make a demon equip my damascus steel forehead protector.
I’d have to capture it, immobilize it, and equip it.

The only thing I can do is test it on myself.
Become a human experiment.
Use [Fire wall] and put my hand in it.
I don’t want to do it.

“That’s right, it would be hard to test the effects. I can understand your anxiety.”
“That’s not it. Testing the effects would be difficult, but what if it fails from adding two or more skills?”
“I trust that you’ll be fine Sherry.”
“Ohhh…”

Sherry looks at me with cold eyes, like I’m some kind of mad scientist.
Things are different for a party that doesn’t mind human experimentation for scientific progress.
A slave or thief could be bought and shot with magic to count how many until they died.
But it would be inhuman to go that far.

If we could conjure a demon, we might be able to test it.
There isn’t any other way to test it.
There probably isn’t any helping it.
I’ll have to accept it as is.

Chapter 109 - Apron

I put on the apron, which I bought from a clothing store in Quratar, and fry the whole fish.
It's called 'apron' but not a shred of 'cute' can be found. It is focused on practicality.
As long as it's I who puts it on, it's alright.

After I carry the dish to the table, we start eating.
As always, the whole fish tatsuta-age is amazing.

"It's boring to eat the same thing every time we celebrate breaking through a floor."
"…"

When Roxanne translates it, Miria looks at me with sorrowful eyes.
No tears?
I opted to start this topic when there was enough whole fish tatsuta-age in the dish.

"I-I didn't mean it like that. It is certainly delicious but it won't remain delicious if we eat it all the time."
"…Bread crumbs, desu."

After pondering over it for a while, Miria speaks.
Fish fry?
If I remember correctly, I made it back when Miria joined us.

"That, huh? Then how about whole fish fry on next celebration?"
"It will be good, I think."
"Yes, I look forward to it."

I obtain Roxanne's and Sherry's agreement.

"Eat, desu!"

Miria's eyes brighten up.
Now livened up, she bites into the tatsuta-age.
She looks really happy.

Even though we have agreed upon what to make on next celebration, Miria still droops her shoulders after eating last piece.
That's not enough to make up for this, I guess.

Next morning. After having breakfast, I head to the merchants guild alone.
I ask Roxanne to do the laundry and cleaning.
I don't want to go to Luke now but I have to.

Can't I just say that I'm far away and can't come back? No, this excuse is not valid for this world.
Because adventurers can use [Field Walk].
It's arguable whether it's a convenient ability or not.
And then there's the question of where is this place I currently am.

I jump to the waiting room of the merchants guild and call Luke.
I was praying for him to suddenly fall ill but he appears right after.
It didn't work.

"Here is the Butterfly Monster Card."

I was led to the meeting room and shown the monster card.

"Indeed. I want to fuse it simultaneously with Kobold Monster Card. Is Kobold Monster Card still not available?"
"There's nothing to buy at 4,000 Nars. If you want to buy it right now, the price can go as high as 5,000 Nars."
"Okay then, Kobold Monster Card for 5,000 Nars."

Someone appears and places a purchase order for Kobold Monster Card.
Previous price was 5,200 Nars, so it seems to have gone down.
Because there's no immediate need for [Wind Resistance], 5,000 Nars is too much.

"Understood. Lately, there are many people looking for Kobold Monster Card. Do you know why? Because of [MP Absorption]. We have received many orders for Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card. The price of Kobold Monster Card will most likely go up, so it may get difficult."

Which reminds me, Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card

was quite expensive when I came here for the first time and placed the order. There has been no news ever since.
[MP Absorption] skill is acquired by simultaneously fusing Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card and Kobold Monster Card.
Did that person, who placed the order for Kobold Monster Card, intends to attach [MP Absorption] skill to their weapon?

“Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant, huh?”
“It was exhibited the other day and sold for quite high.”
“But the price of Kobold Monster Card fell. Is Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card a waste?
“In the auction, many Kobold Monster Cards are exhibited but their use is restricted. Other monster cards can be used readily, so master smiths buy them immediately.”

I see.
Many Kobold Monster Cards appear but not all of them are bought.
They should exhibit same number of Kobold Monster Cards as Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card.

Whether Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant Monster Cards are more or less, people will try to get their hands on them.
Therefore, if you exhibit limited cards, it will stimulate demand.

“I get it. It’s not wise to go for Scissoresque Carnivorous Plant at the moment. For now, I’ll just wait-and-see.”

I have yet to find a Damascus steel sword with empty skill slots.
I’ll first test the effect with a steel sword.

“Very well. Also, there’s a summon for you from the order of Harz knights.”

Kuh…
There’s a summon after all.

“…Now that you mention it, have you heard any rumors about a certain family?”

I nod slightly and try to change the topic.
I believe that I didn’t have an unpleasant expression about my face.

Because I had made up my mind beforehand.
So it's alright, hopefully.

"A certain family?"

It's not confirmed to be Baradam family yet.
So there's no need to mention the family's name.

"They seem to be in financial crisis, so a lot of equipment with skills are flowing into the market."
"Is there any particular equipment you're looking for?"
"I was just informing you. I have already purchased some equipment."
"Thank you and be careful."

After Luke sees me off, I leave the merchants guild.

Next morning. We return from the labyrinth as it's about time.
I always visit the Harz duchy at this time.
There's no choice but to go.

"I'll head to the Bode castle now. I ask of you three to prepare breakfast."
"Understood."
"Please be careful."
"Okay, desu."

Luke must have already told the Duke that he has conveyed the message.
Therefore, I can't afford to not go.
Also, even if I delay it, I won't be able to get away with it.

Actually, if I delay it, the Duke's memory may fade.
So then, should I go tomorrow?
Or the day after tomorrow?

"Are you not going?"

Sherry asks the indecisive me.

"I'm just preparing myself."
"Is that so?"

Somehow, her voice felt cold.
No, her eyes. Her eyes felt cold.
Sherry understands my predicament.

Damn it!
Because I have to go, I said that I'm going.
Now that I have said I'm going, I can't but go.
I [Warp] through the wall of the living room.

"Are the Duke and Gozer-dono there?"
"They're inside, I think."

I jump to the lobby of the Bode castle.
When I inquire a member of the order of knights, I receive a hopeless answer.
Well, I didn't expect them to not be here in the first place.

The knight makes way for me to enter.
They don't seem to be wary enough of a stranger.

It's because of the Duke, I guess.
Since the Duke has permitted me to enter.
Well, it's better than the tradition of not allowing an adventurer to enter the throne room.

I halt in front of the working room.
I take a deep breath in.
I make up my mind and knock.

"Enter."
"Michio here."

Comes Gozer's voice upon which I enter.
The Duke is sitting on the chair while Gozer is standing in front of the desk, fiddling with some papers.

"Oh, Michio-dono? I heard from Gozer about the affair from the other day. Great victory it was."
"Not at all."

Right off the bat, eh?

“To win without even using a sword — incredible.”
“Wha-”
“As expected of the person I rate highly. Even gozer couldn’t see your movement.”
“Yes. Although I know you did something, I have no idea what you did.”

Because Gozer isn’t Lv99, I can’t show it to him.
But I can’t say that.

“Oh well, why don’t you show it to Gozer?”
“Wha-”

Such pressure.

“I have heard about your opponent, too. Sabo Baradam is quite an expert. Although people’s opinion of him as a person isn’t exactly good, he’s a force to be reckoned with when it comes to ability.”
“Wha-”
“But you took him out just like that. You should be proud.”
“Wha-”

I can’t but withstand this.

“But I want to hear as to exactly how you defeated him. Well, it shouldn’t be a secret, right?”
“I’m sorry.”

Because I was being patient, the Duke tries to take advantage.
It’s time to put my foot down.

My assassination art is a secret, hereditary art.
No one but the chosen one can know about it.

“Like I thought. Oh well, it can’t be helped then. Only a fool would show his cards.”
“It’s a matter of course for top explorers and adventurers.”

Gozer joins in for some reason.
I’m glad.
In this world, revealing your techniques is considered foolish, it seems.

If others copy it, you'll become weaker.

What your techniques are, only you should know.
Even when you impart it, you impart it to your children or a selected few disciples.
It's common sense in this world.

"I also heard that the woman who fought before Michio-dono was tremendously strong. Did you teach her your techniques?
"Of course. That she was able to fight like that, it's only natural for her to have learned Michio-dono's arts."

So Roxanne is strong even in Gozer's eyes, huh?

"Not at all."
"Now that you mention it, her fighting style was to keep the opponent close."
"I see. So it was like that."

'You learn, without realizing it, from what is around you.'
However, it's different.

"She is special."
"Hou~"

The Duke becomes interested.
No!
Not Roxanne!

Absolutely not!
It's impossible!
Even if you offer Cassia in exchange… it's impossible!
Not Sherry, too. Miria, neither.

The Duke grins.
I glare at him.
I don't want this topic to go on any further.

"Err… Michio-dono, the Palmasque mirrors, which we purchased from you, we have gifted to two influential figures of the territory. Their opinion of the mirrors was quite favorable."

Reading the mood between the Duke and me, Gozer tries to change the topic.
As expected of Gozer.
The man of the world. (TN: Someone who is highly experienced/wise.)
He must be struggling under the Duke.

“That’s great.”
“And we have already decided to gift one more mirror to someone.”
“Someone?”
“That’s right.”

Gozer nods and the Duke confirms.
They don’t tell me who that someone is, though.
Well, it’s not like I particularly want to know.

“We would like to keep using Palmasque mirrors, decorated with frames made in Talem, as gifts. Therefore, we would like to replenish three mirrors which we have already dispensed. Can you please do it?”

So the reason I was called for was Palmasque mirrors?

“Thank you for your patronage.”

I accept the order.
I need money for the auction.
There’s no reason to decline.

“There’s no rush, though. You can bring one mirror at a time like you did previously. Also, we won’t mind two or three mirrors in excess.”

They didn’t pursue the matter of the duel any further and placed the order. That’s already good enough for me.
‘The fear of danger is more than the danger itself.’
This is such a world.
I return home in pleasant mood.

I didn’t go to the amber merchant, nor Palmasque. I went straight to the Imperial Capital.
It was the day agreed with the clothing store in the Imperial Capital.
I went there a little before the evening.

I received the aprons and returned.

“It looks great. Thank you very much.”
“It’s very well made.”
“Lovely, desu.”

When I arrive at home, the three of them receive their aprons.
They frolickly check their aprons out.
They seem to like the aprons.

The apron tailored by the clothing store of the Imperial Capital is generously frilled. It looks lovely.
The hem of the silk apron is delicately laced.
Also, although there’s no lace in the apron made of ordinary fabric, it looks pretty nonetheless.

“Wear this while cooking. The food will be even tastier.”
“But it will be bad if it gets stained. It’s silk after all.”
“Silk apron is not for use in the kitchen.”

I answer the rational Sherry’s concern.

“Then where do I use it?
“Silk apron is for use in the bedroom. It’s a tradition there where I came from. You wear an apron when you cook. Therefore, in the bedroom, you will wear nothing but the apron and serve me the ‘food’. I want all three of you to do that.“

It’s not a wrong interpretation of the apron. I think so, at least.
It’s a tradition.

“Oh, is that so? Then I’ll try it tonight.”
“Nothing but the apron?”
“Do it, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria seem to be up for it.

After having dinner, I wash their bodies with warm water and head to the bedroom.
It feels like the wedding night.
While my heart was aflutter, the door opens.

Even though I washed their bodies just now.
Well, that is that, this is this.
There's always another stomach for dessert.

"Ooh!"

Dessert, indeed.
When they enter the room, I let out such a sound subconsciously.

"How does it look?"

Asks what appears to be Roxanne's figure. I can see her body yet I can't. 'Don't cover your head and leave your bottom exposed.' Her big breasts are concealed yet they're not. 'Genius displays even in childhood.'
The volume of her mounds pushes the apron from underneath, and expands the gap between the apron and her skin even further.
Although the top of her chest is covered with the white apron, the swelling which is pushing from the sides is emphasizing the size of her chest.

"Wonderful."

One word is enough.

"Thank you very much."
"Sherry looks great, too."

The force of the apron covering Sherry's petite body is tremendous.
She looks just like a child wife.

"I'm a little embarrassed."

This shy expression of hers is the best!

"It looks great on Miria, too."
"Yes, desu."

I would like to see the place where this bluish tail is coming from.
The apron's compatibility with cat ears is preeminent.
The contrast between the frilled shoulder straps and the laced hem is irresistible.

Wow!
Amazing!
I want to eat them!

“Umm… Master, please eat to your liking.”

Now that Roxanne has said so, how can I not eat?
This world is a paradise.
Eden.
The promised land flowing with milk and honey.

Chapter 110 - Cat's Eye

I wake up pleasantly fatigued.
I'm languid on this fine morning.
There's residual passion from last night.

I must make a correction.
It was main course, not dessert.
It has been a long time since I last activated Sex Maniac.
Because it was main course, I couldn't help it.

I doze off for a while to soak the sweet aftertaste in.
Eventually, the pink haze fades away.
At the same time, Roxanne kisses me.

N-Not good.
Even though it took so long for the lingering scent to go away.
Even though it's an every morning thing, it's not good this time.
Last night, I drifted off to sleep without cancelling Sex Maniac. I want to push her down right now.

Roxanne's soft lips and smoothly moving tongue both are sweet.
It's stimulating my sensuality.
I desperately endure the desire for sex which is overcoming me.

But I hold out.
Followed by Roxanne's, I endure Sherry's and Miria's lips.
I'm a man of steel.

"Good morning, desu."
"Good morning, Miria."

I let go of Miria and get up.
Because I said that I would eat them, is that why it feels awkward?
Oh well, it's not like we don't do this every morning.

"Yes, desu."
"Not good."

Miria brings my clothes over as usual.
I decide to cut off the temptation and get dressed up.
There are things to be done today.
I throw my feelings aside. It's a new day.

After having dressed up, we move to the labyrinth.
We seem to have gotten accustomed to Haruba's 16th floor.
The number of attacks received has decreased. Things have settled down.

Although I said 'decreased', it doesn't mean 'zero'.
Because the duration of battles is longer, it's still difficult.
The three in the front take on a group of monsters.
Roxanne exchanges an attack with a monster. Sherry thrusts her spear. Miria stabs with her rapier.

I cast spells from the back.
Three Clamshells drop down with sixth [Sand Storm].
When you take out first batch of monsters, it becomes easier afterward.
Everyone surrounds the remaining Bitch Butterfly and finishes it off.

Next group comprises three Bitch Butterflies and two Clamshells.
It is unusual to have more Bitch Butterflies.
I use wind spells to take out Bitch Butterflies whose weakness is wind magic.

"Here it comes."

Roxanne's voice resounds.
The Clamshell spits water.
Roxanne dodges it with ease.

To be honest, ranged attacks are not that big of a threat.
Roxanne dodges all of the attacks from the front.
Unfortunately, the long-ranged attack of Clamshell isn't considered a magic skill, so the casting delay is non-existent.

Monsters approach from the front.
Three Bitch Butterflies and a Clamshell.
There's another Clamshell in the second row.

Orange magic formation appears under a Bitch Butterfly in the front.

“Sherry.”
“Yes.”

Sherry pokes her spear into the Bitch Butterfly immediately after I call out to her.
She cancels its skill with [Incantation Interruption] skill of her weapon.

“Here it comes.”

Roxanne tilts her neck immediately after announcing that.
While tilting her neck, she takes on the Bitch Butterfly’s attack with her shield.
Water gushes in from there where Roxanne’s head was supposed to be.
When the water breaks off, Roxanne straightens her neck and moves to the right, and exchanges an attack with the Clamshell.

The attack seemed to be from the Clamshell in the second row.
While confronting two monsters in the front, she fended off the attack from the Clamshell in the second row.
Roxanne is terrifying as ever.

I take out the Bitch Butterflies in six [Breeze Storm]s.
It may have become easier but that doesn’t mean we can drop our guard.
That said, it’s rare for us to receive attacks in case of two monsters.
Without much trouble, I finish the two bivalves off with a [Sand Storm].

“I’ll be using sword now.”

Because my MP has decreased, I pull out Durandal and instruct Roxanne.
Since I don’t cast spells when I use Durandal, any combination of monsters is fine.
I haven’t changed the style of my swordfight.

To take out a monster, I can simply use spells until the monster closes in and then finish it off with sword.

Inflicting some damage using spells is better than doing nothing.
Also, I'm prioritizing crystallization over experience at the moment.
Therefore, I should complement Durandal with magic.

As to why I'm not doing so is because I have already issued instructions and it will get confusing if I modify the instructions.
When I use Durandal, the efficiency of acquiring experience drops.
Considering the efficiency of acquiring experience, it's better to use Durandal only for the purpose of recovering MP.
[Rush] is quite useful nevertheless.

It's logical to recover MP using Durandal and use that MP to cast spells.
When I use Durandal, the duration of battles lengthens.
Consequently, the experience acquired in a given time decreases.

So far, I haven't been using magic along with sword but now, I have to obtain a white magic crystal before the auction.
Still, it's better not to change instructions every time.
If she asks for the reason, it'll be hard for me to explain.

Next is the matter concerning jobs.
Four jobs is the limit while using Durandal and [Crystallization 64x].
If possible, I want to use three jobs.
While using sword, I can cancel Wizard job and activate Warrior.

In short, I can't use magic while using Durandal.
Durandal is for the sole purpose of recovering MP.

"Understood. This way."

Roxanne guides us to next location.
We normally walk while traversing through the labyrinth but break into a run when we spot monsters.
If we wait for too long, we might receive a ranged attack.
Since I'm not using magic at the moment, the group of monsters comprises two Clamshells, a Bitch Butterfly and a Sarracenia.

Roxanne slants to her side and rushes diagonally, and slashes at a Clamshell.
Taking the enemies on from the centre is riskier.

Whittle them down from the wings.

I invoke [Rush].
I receive a body slam from a Clamshell and return the favor with a strike.
Roxanne and Miria take on a monster each, too.
Sherry is nudging with her spear from the back.

The Clamshell opens its shell.
Its mouth opens wide. There's no sign of water.
It bites me.
I barely evade it.

When it opens its shell, you have to first be careful of water and then evade its bite.
Even though its movement is excessive while biting, it's not easy to deal with.
It feels like a feint.

I invoke [Rush] again and take the Clamshell out.
Next is the Sarracenia.
This one is troublesome because it uses digestive fluid.
I use [Rush] in rapid succession and finish it off nonetheless.

Using [Rush], I take the Bitch Butterfly out.
I attack the last Clamshell, which Roxanne was confronting, from behind.
Roxanne is terrifying.

The Clamshell opens its shell.
Roxanne maneuvers the upper half of her body and dodges the water.
Brilliantly dodged.
All the party members surround the Clamshell and finish it off.

"I have fought a lot of Clamshells yet I'm unable to understand the pattern of its attack."
"I know, right?"
"When it opens its shell, I don't know if it's going to bite or spit water."
"Umm… when it spits water, it opens its shell like this; when it bites,

it opens its shell like this."

Roxanne explains.
Therefore, it's impossible to understand.
I look at Sherry. She's puzzled just as well.

"Can you distinguish between different attacks of a Clamshell, Miria?"
"She can try next time to distinguish, she says."

In other words, she doesn't know.

"Try best, desu."
"I see. That's great."

Rather than giving up on her, I raise her spirit.
After returning from the labyrinth and having breakfast, I take out the amber necklace.
It has been a long time since I last took it out.

"Amber, desu."
"Do you know about it?"
"Miria rarely found it where she used to live but when she fished in the north sea, she often caught it instead of fish. Everyone except Miria used to get excited upon catching it instead of fish."

But Miria gets more excited upon catching fish.

"It's beautiful, isn't it?"
"Beautiful, desu."
"If there's one that suits Miria, I'll buy it."
"Buy, desu."

She seems to be pleased somewhat.
But not as pleased as she tends to be upon the mention of fish.
Choosing which fish to buy used to be cumbersome.

"Are we going to Palmasque?"

Sherry immediately realizes what I intend to do.

"That's right. I have received an order for three mirrors."
"Okay."

“Well then, Roxanne.”
“Yes. Thank you very much.”

I put the necklace around Roxanne’s neck.
The amber necklace is shining on Roxanne’s chest.
So much so that I want to grab it.

Just like you grab a white peach.
And rip your finger into its soft pulp.
Just like I did last night from the side of the apron.

N-No.
This sexual desire is due to Sex Maniac.
I wonder if it was a bad decision to keep it when I went to sleep.
Usually, I’m not this desirous of sex. Surely. Probably.

I put Sherry’s necklace around her neck and head out.
First up is the amber merchant in Bode.
I jump to Bode’s adventurers guild.

“Welcome.”

When I enter the building next to the adventurers guild, there was an old man with cat ears.
The same old merchant.

“Sorry for bothering you.”
“Not at all, not at all. I have been waiting for you.”
“Can I get some amber ores?”
“Of course, it’s available now.”

He seems to remember me.
And amber seems to be available, too.

“If there’s an amber necklace that suits her, I’ll be buying it.”

I put my hand on Miria’s shoulder.
It’s not wise, however, to expend unnecessarily now that the auction is close.
But I can’t afford for only Miria to not have a necklace.

If I can sell amber ores and mirrors, the profit can offset the cost of

the necklace.
So it's fine.
And there's a possibility that the magic crystal will turn white.
I am hunting with [Crystallization 64x]. I'll manage it somehow.

"Certainly. Here, have a seat, please."
"Thank you."

The old man with cat ears urges the four of us to sit.
The old merchant brings the amber.

"I can provide you with twelve amber ores of the same quality as last time."
"I'll buy all twelve."
"Thank you very much. And here is the necklace."

The old man brings amber necklaces.
Woah! So many.
Because I have already done business with him in the past, is that why he thinks I'm a valued customer?
He puts some in front of Roxanne and Sherry as well.

No, don't.
Roxanne and Sherry already have theirs.
Roxanne doesn't seem to be enchanted.
Sherry is just appraising the product. Is that it?

"Wow, desu."
"There are too many necklaces, I think."
"Beautiful, desu."

It's good for Miria to be excited but…
The three of them are staring fixedly.
They are checking the necklaces out.
Will it be alright?

"Miria likes this one."

Ah, Roxanne has come back to her senses.
She puts the amber necklace on Miria's chest.
It's fine as long as she doesn't put it on her chest.
It was a good idea to have had them put their necklaces on

beforehand.

“What’s best about this necklace?”
“She has a keen eye. This is one of our prided necklaces. It boasts the amber jewel of the highest grade.”

Asks Sherry. The old merchant answers.

“It’s clear and radiant.”
“It’s rare to obtain such an amber. It’s the best we have received in past couple of years.”
“There’s a tint of red as well.”
“People get their hands on such an amber once in a decade. Furthermore, there are multiple jewels of such an impeccable quality in this necklace.”
“Then it must be quite expensive.”
“Not at all. This one costs around 70,000 Nars but we can offer you a discounted price of 69,800 Nars.”

It’s expensive. Very.

“The one which is a bit mild will suit Miria more, I think.”

Sherry puts the necklace back.
She’s well aware of the objective.
She wasn’t having a friendly chat with the old merchant.
She seems to be in her senses, too.

“That’s right. Then how about this necklace?”

The old man takes out another necklace.
Rustling sound could be heard from behind the counter.

“There’s more?”

If it were there, he should have shown it when I asked for a necklace.
I’m sure he lined up those necklaces on the table in front of Roxanne and Sherry to force a sale.

“Red, pink, yellow, white; this necklace comprises amber jewels of various colors. When it’s put on, it resembles a cat’s eye. Therefore,

I would like you to buy this one for this catkin lady.”

Was that a pun?
The old man passes the necklace to Miria.

“Beautiful, desu.”

Well, the necklace is indeed an interesting one, with amber jewels of different colors.
Not bad.
Miria puts it around her neck.

“Doesn’t it look good?”
“I does look good.”

Roxanne and Sherry approve.

“Because it’ll be in care of someone from catkin tribe, I’ll give this to you for a discounted price of 45,000 Nars.”

Is this price reasonable?

“So, what do you say?”
“Err…”

When I ask Miria, hoping for her to decline, she was hesitating.
Her expression tells me that she likes it.

I confirm Sherry’s expression as well.
The price of 45,000 Nars is same as the price of her necklace.
Is Sherry fine with it?

“Then I would like to buy it.”
“Thank you very much. Including the amber ores and considering the fact that there’s a lady from catkin tribe with you, the total amount to pay shall be 38,200 Nars.”

Isn’t that the same excuse from a while ago?
The reason he gave for 30% discount is same as the reason he gave for the original discount.
So, was 45,000 Nars really a reasonable price?
Or did he foresee 30% discount and quoted higher price from the onset?

It’s not inferior to Roxanne’s and Sherry’s necklaces in the slightest.
Such a thing, huh?

“It’s good, isn’t it, Miria?”
“Yes, desu.”
“This small case for the amber ore, made in Talem, is a gift for our dear customer.”

I pay the amount and receive the goods.
Because I was the one who gave him the idea of using cases made in Talem, he gifts one to me.

“Miria, keep the necklace on.”
“Okay, desu. Thank you, desu.”

Miria bows.
She seems to be pleased with it, so it’s money well spent.

Chapter 111 - Dissapointing Mermaid

From Bode's adventurer's guild, we warped to Zabir's labyrinth.
My emotions became depressed, but we hunted demons and recovered my MP.
The labyrinth of Zabir is just a relay point, we left it and went to Palmasque.
We appeared in the adventurers guild in Palmasque.

"It looks like this your first time in Palmasque, Miria."

Miria stands curiously looking out at Palmasque for the first time.
Her cat ears are standing upright.
It's so cute.

"It is white, desu."
"The buildings are white and beautiful."

I put my hand on Miria's head.
While patting her head, I lightly touched her cat ears.

"Sea, desu."
"That's right, was Palmasque supposed to be an island?"

Can you hear the waves, do you smell the water?
Maybe it's something only a Diver can notice.
Or… can you smell the fish?

"xxxxxxxxx"
"Yes, desu."

Roxanne tells Miria off.
We should tell her we came to buy mirror's, not fish.

"I'll leave it to you."
"I understand."
"We'll take care of it."

“Yes, desu.”

I send off the three of them.
I return to Zabir’s labyrinth to recover my MP.
The amount of MP consumed for [Warp] seems to have increased because the amount of party members increased.
I didn’t notice any difference using [Warp] to nearby places, but the difference was made obvious when we came to Palmasque.

How will we get home?
Going straight from Palmasque to the house would probably be bad.
A relay point might be needed.
I need to avoid the mirrors getting broken in a fight, so should I use the recovery medecine?

I returned to Quratar to fill in time.
Quratar’s 13th floor can be used to replenish my recovery medicine, but I don’t go there, because it’s scary.
Instead I fought the Spice Spider boss on the 3rd floor.
There’s not much danger there if I use Durandal.

The pepper item that is dropped by the Spice Spider is indispensable in my rich eating habits.
There might be a better hunting ground for it, but I don’t need it that much.
After filling in time for a while, I used [Warp] to Palmasque again.
When I arrive in the adventurers guild of Palmasque, the three of them were waiting.

“Sorry, Did you wait long?”
“Don’t worry about it, we just got here.”

They have a mirror each.
It seems they got them with no problems.
We went to Zabir’s labyrinth.

“I’ll use medicine to recover before we return to the house. We have mirrors, so we shouldn’t look for any demons.”
“I understand.”

I stopped Roxanne, who was about to look for prey.

After leaving Zabir, we went to our home in Quratar.

My feelings aren't too depressed.
It was the right choice to make a stop at the relay point.
I can tolerate this much.

"The raw gemstones sold at the usual price. The mirrors were the usual price as well."

After putting the mirrors in the store room, Sherry gives me the details as she passes me the money.
I thought that the uncut amber wouldn't sell, so I had given them money for the mirrors.

"Good. I wasn't worried, because Sherry is a good negotiator."
"There are also two orders for amber necklaces."
"For two?"

I'm happy to get orders.
The amber necklaces have a considerable profit margin.
And I can sell two of them.
I might not even need the white crystal anymore.

"When the bosses wife goes out for meetings, she puts on her amber necklace, and it seems to have attracted attention."

A walking billboard.
I sold her a good quality necklace.
If you sell a good item cheaply, you will attract more orders.

"As planned."

Sherry's eyes seem to be looking at me a little coldly, but things have gone as planned.
The plan has shown a good outcome.

"One order is from a lady who serves as a representative on the council committee. She isn't worried about the cost, and wants one of the highest quality. She seems to be quite an influential person and will pay a lot for something of high quality. The bosses wife says she'll pay 35 gold coins."

To even find out the amount of money for the sale…
Sherry is truly excellent.

“I understand.”
“The second one is an order from the bosses wife’s friend. She’d like a similar necklace to the bosses wife, with a price of around 25 gold coins. I think we should prepare a necklace slightly inferior to the one the bosses wife has.”
“We shouldn’t prepare one the same price?”
“I told the bosses wife hers was at a special price when I sold it. It would be bad for her if we brought one the same quality. Just slightly inferior should be good and shouldn’t cause any problems.”

I see.
That sort of thing.
As expected of Sherry.

“It might be difficult to find.”

We need to satisfy the pride of the bosses wife who gave us this business, as well as satisfying the customer.
It will be tough.

“It will be alright. All the amber necklaces are high quality unique items. The colour and sizes are all slightly different. Two that are the same don’t exist. We can spin the description of the item however we want.”
“Ah, you think so?”

Dark Sherry.
She’s very reliable.

Going to buy the amber necklaces after we sell a mirror will be good.
They might not have anything else to sell me yet, but it’s possible some goods have arrived.
It’s worthwhile.

30% discount is only effective when I buy multiple items, so I’ll buy both at the same time.
I can’t expect him to have uncut amber every time I arrive.

We hunted until evening came, and then left the labyrinth.
I ask what everyone wants for dinner as we shop.

“For dinner, I’d like to make pot-au-feu with Miria.”
“Pot-au-feu? That sounds delicious.”
“We won’t need soup then, I’ll make a stir-fry.”
“Okay. I’ll also make a dish.”

The pot-au-feu that Roxanne makes is meat and vegetables slowly cooked, and is considerably delicious.
If there is pot-au-feu, I’ll be happy.
It gives me a chance to make a japanese-style soup.

It probably won’t go well the first time.
Even if I fail it will be alright if we have pot-au-feu.
If it goes well, we can include it with the pot-au-feu.

After returning to the house, I make the japanese-style soup.
I boil some water and stew clams in it with a pinch of salt.
It’s a seafood soup seasoned with salt.

I’m supposed to make it with seaweed.
I don’t know what to use instead.
I’m just making it from salt and clams.
I stew it carefully over a low heat.

“Well. This should be alright.”

It’s only salty, but it’s refreshing and a good result.
It’s not bad.
I’m using the dropped ingredients, so there wasn’t much preparation required.

We don’t have a wooden bowl, so I put it in a cup.
I place it on the dinning table.

“It’s very delicious. As expected of Master.”
“I haven’t tasted this before.”
“Tasty clam, desu.”

Even though the soup is only salty, the opinion of it is alright?

“Hey Miria, if we cook fish with this as well, do you think it will be delicious?”

As well as clam, it should be good to stew other seafood with it.
It’s like cooking in sea water.
Miria’s cat ears react with a twitch.
They turned towards me to make certain she heard my comment.

“Yes, desu. Delicious, desu.”

Miria answered without needing Roxanne’s interpreting.
Trying this with a whole fish might be nice.
I’ll make that next time.

The next day I sell a mirror.
In the morning I go to the duke, and then reach the 16th floor boss room after that.
There’s a room with only a door to the front and back.
It’s the standby room.

“The Clamshell boss is the Oyster Shell. It has a rough shell and it’s offensive power is greater than the Clamshell.”

Sherry gives a description.
Reliable.

I prepare Durandal as I listen to Sherry.
We head into the boss room.
Smoke gathers and two demons appear.
Clamshell and Oyster Shell.

The Oyster Shell is another bivalve demon.
It’s one size larger than the Clamshell.
It’s shell is quite rugged.
It would be painful to be hit by that.

Roxanne rushed up to the Oyster Shell right at the start.
Sherry and Miria also surrounded the Oyster Shell.
The Clamshell is my opponent.
I move past the Clamshell to take it on from the other side.

The Clamshell might shoot water.

I can’t let it face in the direction towards the others.
I attacked it with Durandal, and it focused it’s attention on me.

Since we are fighting a boss, I’m using [Fourth job] with Explorer, Hero, Monk, and Warrior.
Actually, I’d like to try without Wizard and [Plating] from Alchemist. I want to fight using Knights defense.
Can I get some breathing room like that?
Will it be alright even on upper floors if we get in a difficult fight?

No. Am I putting the cart before the horse?
Entering the labyrinth, getting experience and becoming stronger, the purpose is to earn money.
I want to get more bonus points so I can add them to [Increased Experience] and [Increased Crystallization].
I don’t need to fight against anyone too tough.

I use [Rush] on the Clamshell.
The shell moves.
The Clamshell opens it’s mouth and prepares to sandwich me.

I withdraw, and manage to avoid it this time.
According to Roxanne, the way the shell opens when it’s going to shoot water, and when it’s going to sandwich is different.
I can’t tell the difference at all.

I finish it by using [Rush] in rapid succession.
I joined the seige on the Oyster Shell.
I attack it from the side because Roxanne is handling the front.
Miria is to one side, and Sherry is slightly back to the other side, each attacking.

The shell of the Oyster Shell moves.
It tries to sandwich Roxanne.
Roxxane dodges with a half step.
She blocks it’s charge with her shield as well.

It feels peaceful when Roxanne is the opponent.
I attack from the back, and the shellfish stops it’s movement.
I use [Rush] and drive in Durandal.

The Oyster Shell's body shakes.
It falls to the side.
Smoke spouts from the demon.
It seems that I gave the decisive blow this time.

When we surround a boss with everyone, it's not certain that I'll be the one to give the final blow.
When we surrounded the Clamshell before it was Sherry who gave the final blow.
It's the same thing.

The fact it has a large amount of HP doesn't really matter.
The ratio of HP that I do compared to the other three is what's important.
If I simplify it, if those three combined do half the damage of Durandal, then the probability of me delivering the final blow is 2/3. If the other three can do the same damage as Durandal, then the probability of me giving the final blow becomes half.
Later on, it might not be worth using [Increased experience] and [Increased crystallization] against bosses.

If I think about it, is it a good thing?

The smoke disappears and an item is left behind.
The dropped item from the Oyster Shell is volley TN: ボレー
Is it bird food?
I thought it would be an oyster because it's from an oyster.

"I thought an oyster would be dropped."
"The oyster is a rarer item, there's no helping it if it doesn't drop."

Sherry teaches me.
So there is an oyster?
The volley is the usual drop, and oyster is the rare drop.
I should have used Cook.

I didn't use it, so there's no helping it.
If it's similar to the clam and I need 4, I'd have to do this fight dozens of times.
That might be hard.
We obtained the volley, and continued to the 17th floor.

“Sherry, what demon is on Haruba’s 17th floor?”
“The Kettle Mermaid. It occasionally uses water magic, and has a resistance to water magic. It’s weakness is earth magic and there’s a chance of being poisoned when it attacks you.”
“It’s element is the same as the Clamshell? That’s good. Roxanne, please find one.”
“Um, I think there is a group with both Clamshell and Kettle Mermaid nearby. I don’t think there are many, is that alright?”

Roxanne asks.
As the floors go up, the maximum number of demons increases as well.
Does the chance to find a single demon on a floor also become more difficult?

“I understand. Roxanne freely use your judgement in the future.”
“Thank you”

Roxanne guides us.
She guides us to a group of one Kettle Mermaid, and one Clamshell.
I use [Sand Storm].

The Kettle Mermaid is a disappointing mermaid.
Even though it’s called a mermaid. The face and chest of a beautiful woman… is not there.
It has a long mouth and a distorted clown face.
So, it’s a kettle?

It becomes a fish straight away below the neck.
It’s more of a human faced fish than a mermaid.
With the face of a clown.
It doesn’t walk, but instead swims towards us.

It’s sickening.
Also, it has poison.
I use earth magic again.

The Kettle Mermaid and Clamshell are defeated with seven earth magics.
The combat time went smoothly.

Chapter 112 - 17th Floor

On Haruba's 17th floor, the next group we're up against is that of a Bitch Butterfly and Kettle Mermaids.
I take the Kettle Mermaids out, whose weakness is earth magic, in seven earth spells. After which, I finish the Bitch Butterfly off in three [Breeze Ball]s.

"Although the duration of battle was long, there doesn't seem to be any problem with this combination."
"Yes. Kettle Mermaids and Clamshells both are weak against same attribute of magic, therefore, it will be easier to shortlist the combinations of monsters. If you can take out Kettle Mermaids and Clamshells, there will only be one or two monsters remaining at the end."

Honestly, I think Roxanne becomes whatever you want her to be.
I cast [Meteor Crash].
The Kettle Mermaids collapse in just one [Meteor Crash].
Like I conjectured, [Meteor Crash] seems to be effective against monsters whose weakness is earth magic.

[Meteor Crash] is a magic attack where you shoot a scorching meteorite.
If it possesses earth attribute, too, it won't be absurd.
It works against monsters whose weakness is fire magic, and equally against monsters whose weakness is earth magic.
If it weren't special, it wouldn't be a bonus spell.

"This much trial is enough."

We seem to be able to fight on Haruba's 17th floor without any trouble.
It's time to kick the exploration off.

The next group we encounter comprises three Kettle Mermaids and two Clamshells.
Although there are many monsters, all of them are weak against

earth magic, so there's no problem.
I cast [Sandstorm].
In the middle of the attack, a Kettle Mermaid suddenly comes to a halt.

"Here it comes."

Unfortunately, a blue magic formation appears under the feet of the mermaid.
Nope. Tail, not feet.

"Water magic, huh?"

The Kettle Mermaid spits water from its hyottoko-esque mouth. (TN: Hyottoko https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hyottoko)
It's more of an archerfish than a mermaid.
Roxanne maneuvers the upper half of her body and dodges the water.
At the same time, a Clamshell in the front opens its shell.

"Here it comes."

The Clamshell spits water, too.
When there are many monsters, such things happen.That's why it's difficult.
Although Roxanne was in a difficult position, having already dodged the water magic attack of the mermaid, she twists her body splendidly to evade the bivalve's water.

As expected of Roxanne.
If I were there, I would have surely received it.
Actually, forget the second attack, I'm not even sure if I would have dodged the first one.

While enduring the [Sandstorm], two Kettle Mermaids and a Clamshell line up in the front.
Roxanne, Sherry and Miria take on a monster each.
The Clamshell in the second row seems to be waiting for an opportunity to spit water.
The Kettle Mermaid, that used the water magic attack earlier, joins the Clamshell in the second row.

Is this so because it needs time to construct the magic formation?
The Kettle Mermaid requires magic formation to use its water magic attack.
Therefore, it requires time.

It's likely that the water magic attack of the Kettle Mermaid is stronger than the Clamshell's.
It's not like I'm not gonna volunteer myself to test it.
There was no opportunity for the monsters in the second row to spit water. All the monsters drop down with next [Sandstorm].

We continue to hunt on Haruba's 17th floor and leave the labyrinth when it was time for breakfast.
I decided against moving to Bode's 12th floor.
Because tartar sauce is required for fish fry.
Even if I catch a whole fish, I won't be able to do anything with it.

Miria understands that, too.
Which reminds me, It's about time I visit Quratar's 16th floor.

"Let's go to Bode's 12th floor after breakfast."
"Okay, desu."
"I wanted to clear Quratar's 16th floor but I have decided to do it tomorrow, early morning."

I talk it over with Roxanne and company.

"I have no issue with early morning."
"The monster native to Quratar's 17th floor is Ma Bream."
"Go, desu."

Says Miria without needing Roxanne to translate.
She must have caught the word 'Ma Bream' from Sherry's conversation.
Well, if we can catch whole fish on Quratar's 17th floor, there's no need to go to Bode's 12th floor.

"Alright then, after breakfast, let's grab the map and head to Quratar's labyrinth. I'll ask of you three to prepare the meal while I'm out to sell the mirrors."

If I take the three of them with me, I can deliver the mirrors in one

go but I won't do it.
It'll be bad for the Duke seems to have taken interest in Roxanne.
And there's a possibility that Roxanne will blurt out things that should otherwise be kept secret.
Therefore, I'll go by myself.

I jump to Bode with a mirror.
I deliver it to the working room.

"Michio-dono, did you come here alone?"

The Duke asks after I deliver the mirror.
I knew it. Not bringing Roxanne here with me was the right decision.

"Yes, I did come here alone."
"N-No, I just wanted to hear about that affair from her. There's no motive I should have guilty conscience for."

The Duke makes an excuse in a hurry.
This is bad.
I might have subconsciously glared at him with bloodlust.

"…"
"I'm already married to Cassia."

Obviously.

He has such an outstandingly beautiful wife.
If he ever tries to ogle Roxanne, I'll take the matter to cassia.

"Oh well, anyways."
"The price of this one is 10,000 Nars."

Gozer takes out a gold coin.
Gozer must really be having it tough under the Duke.

I receive the coin and return home.
After having breakfast, I make mayonnaise with the help of Miria.
Because we have already had the meal, I decide to use whole eggs this time.

"Miria, can you blend it?"
"Do, desu."

Because blending it is difficult, I leave it to Miria.
Miria blends it hard.
Blending it really is difficult.

After a while, Miria's hands slow down.
Still, her hands are not that slow. Because it's for the fish, perhaps?

"If it's not mixed well, it will not be as tasty as the whole fish tatsuta-age."
"Do, desu."

When her hands slow further down, I remind her.
Making fish fry won't be as hard a work as this.

"The more you blend it, the tastier will the whole fish fry be."
"Blend, desu."

If it's not blended, it's not mayonnaise.

"Alright, it's done."
"…Okay, desu."

All this blending seems to have drained all her energy.
I'm sure that she will demand fish fry soon after all this hard work.
Having made mayonnaise, we move to Quratar's 16th floor.

"Let's warm up a bit because it has been quite some time since we were last here."
"Understood."

I instruct Roxanne.
I has been a while since we last visited Quratar's 16th floor.
Warm up is a must.

We hunt monsters under Roxanne's guidance.
Ah, I remember.
You mostly need wind spells on Quratar's 16th floor.
It was an easy floor. I remember.

Regrettably, it isn't as easy this time as it was last time.
Oh well, it can't be helped.
Our equipment have upgraded and I have alba this time. But that's

about it.
Our levels are essentially the same as last time.

My emphasis is on crystallization for the time being, due to which, the speed of leveling up has dropped.
This is probably the reason.

“Is this much enough?”

It’s time to finish warming up and start exploring.
Only, this time around, we will explore per the map of Quratar’s labyrinth.

“This way. But there’s a group of Bitch Butterflies and Fly Traps on the way.”
“Whatever, let’s proceed.”
“Understood.”

I can’t be picky about the combination of monsters now that I’m following the map.
I have to take care of whichever monster I encounter en route.
There’s no bypass marked on the map.

However, it’s unusual for Fly Traps to be on 16th floor.
Actually no, it’s not unusual.
Fly trap is native to Quratar’s 13th floor, so it’s possible to encounter it on 16th floor.
Roxanne was avoiding it when we were here last time.

Quratar’s 16th floor doesn’t house only those monsters that are weak against wind magic.
In other words, it was all thanks to Roxanne.

“As expected of Roxanne. I knew Roxanne would be a big help.”
“Eh? Ah… yes, thank you very much.”

Even though the person doesn’t understand, the feeling of gratitude has been conveyed.
Now that there are monsters that are weak against different attributes of magic, I can use Durandal instead but my MP isn’t particularly low.
I’ll be using it in the boss battle anyway.

We advance through the cave.
We come across a group of one Bitch Butterfly and one Fly Trap.
I cast [Breezestorm].

Ideally, I should first take the Fly Trap out because of the poison but the Bitch Butterfly is resistant to fire magic.
So I can't use fire magic which is the weakness of Fly Trap.
Using wind magic, which is the weakness of Bitch Butterfly, I first try to take the butterfly out.

The monsters close in. Roxanne and Miria take them on.
Sherry positions herself behind the two, holding her spear with [Incantation Interruption] skill in her hands and keeping her eyes on the monsters.
I position myself to Sherry's side, casting spells. This is our formation.

The Fly Trap splits its head open to trap Roxanne in it, but she shifts to her left and dodges it.
Miria slashes at the Bitch Butterfly.

I take the Bitch Butterfly out with next [Breezestorm].
We surround the remaining monster, Fly Trap.
I cast fire spells from there where it can't attack me directly.
Sherry pokes her spear from a distance.

Roxanne dodges the attack of the Fly Trap with ease.
I shoot a [Fireball] at the Fly Trap.
Sherry and Miria stab their spear and rapier into it, respectively.
The Fly Trap collapses under the attacks of all the party members.

In the end, it was engulfed in the flames of my [Fireball].
The Fly Trap falls down to the side.
It finally turns into smoke and dissipates.

Ah!

When the smoke cleared away, what remained was a card.
A monster card.

When I used [Appraisal], it said Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card.

Is it, really?
Fly Trap surely has a split head.
Just like a pair of scissors.

“Yes, desu.”

Miria picks it up and passes it to me.
Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant, huh?
Although I instructed Luke the broker to not actively search for a Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, I get one myself.

“[MP Absorption], right?”
“That’s right.”
“What if I don’t use it simultaneously with a Kobold Monster Card?”
“If you fuse it with a weapon, the weapon will acquire [MP Shave] skill. When you attack with the weapon, you recover a bit of MP.”

Sherry explains.
Bit by bit, huh?
I wonder how big or small is that bit.
It can’t be big, surely.

“Is it good?”
“I’ve heard good things about it. Wizards carry it as a substitute for amulet. It would look funny, though, if a wizard were to use their staff to hit.”

So it works as a substitute for an amulet. It’s still better than consuming pills.
I shouldn’t have high hopes, though.
So, should I try it?

“If I fuse it with shoes, can’t I recover a bit of MP with every step I take in the labyrinth.”
“It’s impossible.”
“What if I stab the sole of my shoe into a half dead monster?”

Why is it not possible?
If I can’t recover a bit of MP with every step while I walk, I should be able to recover MP if I pierce the monster with the sole of my shoe.
Or should I try attaching knives to the soles of my shoes? Just like

skates.
Even if it recovers MP just once, it's not a bad deal.

"…"

Sherry looks at me with cold eyes.
A pioneer is never understood at first.
She will understand with the passage of time.

"Since wizards and monks use it, it's probably better to fuse it with a wand. I can hit the monster with the tip of the wand or when I walk, I can hold it upside-down, so that its tip touches the ground. Ah! Whenever I use area of attack magic, I can keep hitting the monsters with the tip of the wand until the attack cools down.
"…"

Oh time, catch me if you can.

"L-Let's move on?"
"Yes."

Roxanne urges me to proceed.
Mostly, we proceed per map but when we spot monsters in the vicinity, we take them out.
We can afford to wander around because on Quratar's 16th floor, the combinations of monsters that require only wind spells are many.

On the way, I pull out Durandal and recover MP.

We fight Madame Butterfly.
Because we have fought Madame Butterfly many times already, there's no problem.
We finish the seductive-eyed boss off.

I add fifth job and activate Cook before moving on to 17th floor.
It's funny that I had four jobs during the boss battle but five after the battle.
Oh well, Cook is necessary, so it can't be helped.
Because I'm not familiar with 17th floor, Monk is needed, too.

On 17th floor, I cast [Meteor Crash] all of a sudden.
Ma Breams Lv17 drop down but Bitch Butterfly Lv17 doesn't.

So I can one-hit Ma Breams, huh?
[Meteor Crash] is undoubtedly effective against the monsters that are weak against earth magic.

Out of the three Ma Breams, one dropped a whole fish.
I finish the remaining Bitch Butterfly with a [Breezeball].

“Whole fish, desu.”
“To get one at the first attempt is definitely a good omen.”

I receive the whole fish from Miria.
Thereafter, we continued to hunt until we had two whole fish.

On Quratar’s 17th floor, you mostly need earth and wind magic.
Due to Ma Breams, whose weakness is earth magic, 17th floor is more difficult compared to 16th, where only wind magic was required, but it still doesn’t seem to be that difficult.
We seem to be able to fight on Quratar’s 17th floor without much trouble.

Chapter 113 - Negotiator

Next day. I make tartar sauce, fillet the whole fish, dredge it in bread crumbs and fry it.
This is the result of high quality ingredients.
The taste of whole fish fry is a level above fish fry's.

"It's delicious."
"Tasty, desu."

When I bite through the crispy coating of bread crumbs into the soft fish meat inside like puri~, it melts in my mouth like juwa~.
Perfect harmony between light and rich.
The tartar sauce isn't too strong, resulting in a faintly sour taste.

"It's really delicious. I'm really happy that I was bestowed with such a luxury."
"Same as what Roxanne-san said."
"Happy, desu."

The three of them are satisfied.
As to why Miria is feeling satisfied, it's probably because she made the mayonnaise herself.

"Do you remember the soup I made the other day? Next time, I'll make one with whole fish."
"Soup, desu."
"Or I can fry it with bread crumbs again."
"Soup, desu."

This is most likely the-difficulty-of-making-mayonnaise talking.

The whole fish fry was truly satisfying.
It was so good that I subconsciously stretched my hand out for one more piece.
It finished quite quickly. Miria has her shoulders drooped. Oh well, it can't be helped.
Expect more next time.

I deliver third mirror to the Duke during the early morning break.
I didn't bring Roxanne with me, of course.
I receive the amount and an order for three more mirrors.

I return home and take out the necklaces.
Before going to buy mirrors, we have to get our preparations done.
I jump to Bode's adventurers' guild and head to the amber merchant.

"Welcome. Unfortunately, we don't have amber ores available at the moment."
"That's bad. Fortunately, I came here today to buy a necklace."
"Very well. Come inside, please."

The old man with cat ears leads us inside the building.

"I'll leave choosing the necklace to you three."
"Certainly."
"Please leave it to me."
"Okay, desu."

While following the old man, I instruct them.

"Last time, you showed us a necklace that, according to you, had the best amber you obtained in the past few years. Is that necklace still available?"

Before taking her seat, Sherry makes the first move and asks the merchant.

"Of course. Here it is."

The old man hurries behind the counter and brings the necklace.
Sherry asked for the necklace from the other day, huh?

"It's wonderful, indeed. This color, this transparency; it's certainly the amber jewel of the highest grade."

Sherry picks the necklace up and praises it.
Is it alright to praise it so much?
He may take unfair advantage of us if we show weakness.

"Exactly."
"What was its price, again?"

“Like I said last time, I’ll give it you for a discounted price of 69,800 Nars.”

Same as last time, huh?
He doesn’t seemt to be taking unfair advantage.

Sherry sighs when the merchant tells her the price.
And mumbles ‘same price, huh?’.
She puts the necklace back.

“Is there any other necklace like this one?”
“Like this one? Hmm… here, this one may not be exactly like that necklace but…”

The old man takes out another necklace.
A large amber jewel is hanging in the centre of the necklace.

“I see. This one is good, too.”
“This necklace boasts the Big Ball of Deep Crimson. It’s an amber that appears once in a fifty years. Therefore, unlike other necklaces, this necklace doesn’t contain more than one jewels. The price of this one is 65,000 Nars.”
“Un”

Sherry folds her arms and tilts her neck.
In the meantime, the old merchant puts the necklace in front of Miria and Roxanne.

“It’s beautiful.”
“Beautiful, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria thoughtlessly frolic.

“What do you say?”

Sherry holds the two necklaces in front of such Roxanne.

“Err… well…”
“I think this necklace with multiple jewels is better but its price…”
“I see. If you like it so much, I can reduce the price to 68,000 Nars.”

Seeing the troubled Sherry, the old merchant drops the price further.

“Un, more.”
“67,500 Nars. No less than this.”
“It can’t be helped any more than this. I think it’s good.”

When the merchant reduces the price, Sherry brings the necklace over to me.
She made him drop the price twice.
Such a formidable girl Sherry is.

“Got it.”
“I want another necklace within 50,000 Nars.”
“Very well. Here, how about these?”

The old man brings two necklaces.
He passes the necklaces to Sherry.

“This?”
“The necklace in your left hand has an amber jewel of fine quality. It has mild yet rich hue. The one in your other hand has an amber jewel with strong shine. Its quality is not much less than the other one. The left one is priced at 52,000 Nars while the price of the other one is 50,000 Nars.”
“I see. But there seems to be a hint of impurity in this one.”

After listening to the explanation of the merchant, Sherry compares the two and returns one.
It’s the necklace she was holding in her right hand.

“There are other necklaces, too. This necklace here is of fine quality but its price exceeds 56,000 Nars.”
“This is certainly good but there’s an instruction from the customer.”

Sherry holds the necklace for a moment but returns it to the merchant immediately after.
The old merchant is aware that we will resell the necklace.

“That’s right. Then how about this one? Its shine is strong yet its hue is harmonious. This one is priced at 54,500 Nars.”
“Seems good but the customer… un, what do you think?”
“Err… well…”
“Un, desu.”

Sherry approaches Roxanne and Miria for consultation.
This is useless, I think.
I don't think these two are in a position to answer.

"Okay then, I can give it to you for a special price of 53,500 Nars. How about this?"
"Indeed… but… un"

Sherry tilts her neck.

"Then how about 53,000 Nars?"
"Don't you think it's a little high?"
"H-How about 52,500 Nars, then? No less than this."
"I understand. It's better now, I guess."

Sherry passes the necklace, the price of which has been reduced to 52,500 Nars, to me.
Somehow, this seems to be the limit.
Sherry definitely has all the makings of a good broker.

"Then I'll be buying these two necklaces."
"Thank you very much. I had a good business today. This calls for a feast. Alright then, the total amount to pay for the two necklaces shall be 84,000 Nars."

30% discount is effective, of course.
I will show no mercy.
I'm a bad guy.

I pay the money and receive a small wooden case as gift.
From Bode's adventurers' guild, I jump to Zabir's labyrinth.
I start hunting monsters under Roxanne's guidance.

"Now that I think about it, why did you ask for a necklace within 50,000 Nars? It's similar to the one we sold to the workshop owner's wife. And the one we sold to the owner's wife fetched 55,000 Nars."

When I take a breather after having recovered some MP, Sherry asks.

"Only an amateur would sell an item which costs 50,000 Nars for

50,000 Nars. A real merchant would sell a 50,000 Nars item for 55,000 Nars. Going by the same token, if I have to sell something for 55,000 Nars, I will keep the cost limited to 50,000 Nars."
"I see."

I'm a professional.
A professional consumer.

"Umm… that merchant first put the 50,000 Nars necklace in front for comparison. The necklace, however, was of inferior quality. It shows that the merchant was really cunning. Everyone would doubt whether the necklace really is worth 50,000 Nars or not. Thereafter, he took out 56,000 Nars necklace. Between the 50,000 Nars necklace and the 56,000 Nars necklace, everyone would choose the latter.

Such tactics were used during the negotiation, huh?
Sherry is reliable, after all.

"In Palmasque, will you be able to sell it for more than the cost?"
"Because I know the cost this time, it will be difficult. Because I know the cost, I will try my hardest during the bargaining to keep myself from going into red and the other party will notice it immediately. It will be possible if I do some preparations beforehand. However, we have already sold similar necklace to the owner's wife. Even if I'm prepared, if I try to sell it for more than the price last time, the owner's wife won't be as polite this time as she was last time."

It does seem difficult no matter how you look at it.
Oh well, I will entrust it to Sherry.

"Is that so? As expected of Sherry."
"Not at all. Even after all that negotiation, I couldn't make him lower the price by more than 500 Nars at a time. Later, however, he lowered it by about 30% without saying anything."
"R-Really?"

After having noticed it on numerous occasions, Sherry seems to have caught on to the pattern of 30% discount.
Should I try shuffling it with 10% discount every now and then?

“It’s natural for such a person of virtue as Master.”
“Natural, desu.”
“It’s not virtue but yeah, such a thing is not out of place.”

I grab the straw provided to me by Roxanne.
I’m not sure if Miria understands what it’s about.
To escape from this situation, I jump to Palmasque.

“This time around, we may get late.”
“I understand.”

We won’t consign the necklace to the owner’s wife. Rather, we would have her introduce us to the prospective buyers and we would sell the necklace to them directly.
As Sherry said, it will require more time than the last time.

“We will be going then.”
“I’ll do my best.”
“Go, desu.”

I see the three of them off from Palmasque’s adventurers’ guild.
I head back to Quratar via Zabir’s labyrinth.
I engage in the boss battle of Quratar’s 3rd floor to recover my MP and replenish pepper.
With Durandal, I can take out Spice Spider by myself.

After the boss battle, I jump to the merchants’ guild.
I call for Luke the broker in the waiting room.

“Welcome. What brings you here today?”
“Actually, I’m not here to place order this time but to inquire something. If you don’t mind, that is.”
“Of course. Come with me, please.”

Luke comes over shortly after and leads me to the meeting room.
I take a seat and talk to Luke.

“Do you know about the auction held on the holidays?”
“Yes, I do.”
“I intend to participate in it.”
“It’s in five days time.”

So close already?
It's right after I will be done with selling the mirrors.

"Because it's my first time, I don't know about the proceedings, so I want to learn the basics."
"I see. How much do you know about the auction?"
"Just some rumors I heard from here and there."

I have only seen some charity auctions on television and a few internet auctions.
I haven't participated in one personally.
The auction in this world may not necessarily be the same.

"The proceedings start off with the seller setting the minimum bid. In case of successful bid, it is mandatory for the seller to sell at the bid price, so the seller has certain expectations of the bid. In case there's no successful bid, the deposit is required to be forfeited as penalty. For that reason, in a way, the minimum bid becomes the price.
"So it has to be taken into account, huh?"
"The first buyer has to bid the price not less than the minimum bid. Subsequent buyers have a protocol to follow. Any bid subsequent to the first bid shall not be less than the prevailing bid. The denomination of increment in the bid shall be: 100 Nars in case the bid is less than 10,000 Nars; 1,000 Nars in case the bid is 10,000 Nars or more but less than 100,000 Nars; 10,000 Nars in case the bid is 100,000 Nars or more. If the denomination of increment in the bid is 10 times the bid, it's not against the rules but it's against the etiquette.

I was right to have asked him beforehand.
So, if a bid of 1,000,000 Nars suddenly pops up, it's against the etiquette?
I must be careful.
Other than that, it doesn't seem to be any different from the auctions I saw.

"Got it."
"I think you'll be good if you know this much. Later, you'll understand it better when you witness it in person."

“I really feel bad that I’m not placing any order. Talking about placing order, last time, there was a person who placed an order for Kobold Monster Card. Which weapon did he fuse it with for [MP Absorption] skill?”

Now that I have learned about the auction, I try to change the topic.

“I have no idea about him but [MP Absorption] skill is usually attached to a wand or a spear.”
“Really?”
“Now that you mention it, I heard about a family in financial crisis the other day. It’s Baradam family. To raise funds, they’re exhibiting Holy Spear. If you intend to attach [MP Absorption] skill, you should go for it. That person must be aiming for it, too.”

So it was Baradam family, after all.
I heard from Sherry that Holy Spear increases magic attack power.

“You can expect that weapon to be sold out immediately.”
“If you fail, you can look for other weapons. Should you decide to switch to a different weapon, I can search for better weapons than Holy Spear.”
“I see.”
“Before engaging in bidding war, you should better evaluate if the price is high or not, in my opinion.”

Although the raw material remains even if [Monster Card Fusion] fails, isn’t it better to try it with another weapon?
What if it fails and the remade weapon is worse than the original?
That said, I don’t think it will end up as failure now that we have been succeeding in a row.
The success of fusion is based on luck. If you can’t identify empty skill slots via [Appraisal], that is.

Chapter 114 - Experience

After hearing some information from Luke, I returned to the adventurers guild in Palmasque.
Three people meet me as soon as I arrive.
Each of them has a mirror.

Sherry has a smiling face.
The necklaces seem to have sold without any problems.

“Welcome back. It looks like things went well.”

Without listening to a reply, we returned to the house via Zabir’s labyrinth.
Sherry gives a report as I put the mirrors in the store room.

“First of all the bosses wife in Palmasque introduced us to the woman who was formally a representative on the council committee. She lives in a simple yet elegant mansion.”
“It was amazing.”
“It was big, desu.”
“After seeing the mansion, I thought I might be able to get 40 gold coins, but it didn’t work out. As a special price for being introduced by the bosses wife we accepted 38 gold coins.”

Originally the plan was for 35 gold coins, but you got 38.
As expected of Sherry.
Additionally she gained favor with the bosses wife, she’s quite shrewd.

“Well done.”
“The second was sold to the bosses wives friend for 25 gold coins as promised. Everything went well, and both of them were pleased. I told the bosses wife this one was a little smaller, and it went perfectly.”

Even if they are friends, will the friend be happy with a slightly smaller necklace?
It seems complicated.

“That’s good. You’ve done well.”
“Thank you.”

I received 63 gold coins, and 20 silver coins from Sherry.
The silver coins are the price of the small boxes.
She seems to have sold them without mercy.

I have made a great deal of profit with this.
I don’t need to rely on the white crystal anymore.

“It happened when I stopped worrying about it?”

After hunting the following morning, I checked the rucksack when we had a break at noon.
Light will be followed by shadows.
No, this isn’t something bad.
But, bad things might happen in the future so I should be prepared.

“What happened?”
“Do you want to see it?”

I pulled out the magic crystal which had turned white, and showed it to Roxanne.
The white magic crystal.
It’s finally been completed.

“It’s amazing. As expected of Master.”
“It’s the first time I’ve seen one.”
“As expected, desu.”

This will be really good.
If anyone extremely good shows up in the auction I will be prepared.

“I’ll go and sell it in the guild this evening.”
“Um, yes.”

Roxanne looks puzzled.
The three of them don’t understand what happened.
Sherry, I want you to stop looking at me with suspicious eyes.

In the evening I went to Quratar’s explorers guild to sell.
Quratar’s explorers guild is the largest, and that’s part of my plan.

The evening is the busiest time.

I put the white crystal and the yellow crystal on the tray with all the items I collected.
I add to that the nourishment medicine and strengthening medicine I had in my item box.
Selling the white crystal and yellow crystal together will give a 30% bonus.
[30% increased sale price] works when selling in the guild.

There is a white gold coin that has the value of 100 gold coins in this world.
I haven't seen one.
A white magic crystal is worth one million nars. A white gold coin.
If I sell a white magic crystal, I might receive a white gold coin.

If I sell the white magic crystal with something and get the 30% bonus, 30 gold coins will come back with the white gold coin, instead of just the white gold coin on it's own like normal.
The staff of the guild might think it is strange.

If I sell a white crystal with a yellow crystal it would be 1 white gold coin with 43 gold coins.
It might still be noticeable like this.
I need to sell enough other items to conceal the bonus.

I wait in front of the counter.
The female receptionist returns with money on a tray.
She doesn't appear to be suspicious.

There is one white gold coin.
It has an appearance similar to a silver coin.
It's amazing for a gold coin.
The size is also different, and you can notice it's not a silver coin straight away.

This is a white gold coin?
I feel like I suddenly became rich.
Well, actually I did.

I quickly put the white gold coin and the gold coins in my item box.

The remaining silver coins and copper coins I slide into my rucksack, and then leave the explorers guild in a hurry.
I went to the adventurers guild at a quick pace.
I'm behaving suspiciously because I'm not used to having so much money.

"I don't think anyone is coming."
"Right. I think it's fine."

As I entered the adventurers guild I kept checking outside to see if I was being followed.
Even I dislike how timid I'm being.
It doesn't look like anyone is following me at the moment.

"Should I do some shopping before I go back?"

There is no known magic or skills to steal items from someone elses item box.
There shouldn't be any problems.
I can go back after shopping.

"Master, there is a message from Luke. He seems to have made a successful bid for a green caterpillar's monster card."

When I return to the house, there is a message from Luke waiting.
Roxanne reads the message.
It's the green caterpillars monster card?
A spare sacrificial misanga can be made with it.

The next morning I sold a mirror, then headed to the merchants guild after breakfast.
I asked Roxanne to handle the washing and cleaning up.
I'm a little sorry because I haven't been making the breakfast lately.
Though, I'm preparing the water used for the washing and cleaning.

I called for Luke the broker, and we went to the conference room.

"Yesterday after making a successful bid for the green caterpillars monster card, I also made a successful bid of 5,000 nars on a kobold monster card."

Luke pulls out two monster cards.

I checked them, and they really are a kobold and green caterpillar monster cards.

“That’s great.”
“This one’s the kobold monster card. Since the holiday is close, the amount being exhibited might increase a bit.”
“I see.”

Is there more spending during holidays?
Are they making money to prepare for the auction?
Crap.
The amount of rivals is increasing.

“Debt repayments are due at the end of the season.”

Is that the same as the story where people sold their items on new years eve in the edo period?
Since there is no end of month in this world, it’s the end of the season?

“Oh. So this one is the green caterpillar then.”

I confirm it out loud, and put the monster cards in my item box.
It doesn’t make any difference to me since I checked them with [Analyze] anyway.
I handle them carefully.
Someone who can’t use [Analyze] would handle them carefully.

I paid the price, and 700 nars commission for the monster cards.
I might be taken advantage of if I order the same thing over and over, so I didn’t order another kobold monster card this time.
The harem might increase because of the auction, so I didn’t cancel the order for green caterpillar monster cards.

“To repay their debt at the end of the season, the fallen Baradam family will be exhibiting a Sacred Spear today.”
“There’s am exhibition today?”
“Yes. The information about the Sacred Spear being exhibited has probably been spread to increase sales on kobold monster cards. They want to lure in more bidders.”

I could put [MP absorption] on a Sacred Spear.

“Is it possible to see the exhibition of the Sacred Spear?”
“Well… it’s not impossible.”

Luke hesitated.

“Is there a problem?”
“There’s a story. Can you keep it to yourself?”
“I understand.”
“The Baradam house seem to have brought the Sacred Spear to the brokers first, but the price offered was too cheap so they switched to an exhibition. The brokers have decided not to bid, except on orders of kobold monster cards.”

Luke exposes it.
Nobody will bid on it.
The successful bid will be a low price.

I already knew that brokers were nasty.
It wouldn’t be good to make them angry.
Maybe it’s a warning from Luke to me.
That this will happen to me if I do something selfish.

“Then, the first lowest bid will be a successful bid.”
“That’s right. Or if the starting bid is too high we might call everything off.”

Isn’t there a deposit they’d lose?
I’m interested in the Sacred Spear, but I probably shouldn’t go for this one.
It would be bad if I opposed the brokers.
The bid price might jump up if there’s a bidding war with a guest that wants to put [MP absorption] on it.

“I won’t bid on it. I just want to watch.”

I give Luke some reassurance.

But, what if the story that they were refusing to bid was made up?
If there is an item you want by any means possible you could spread a rumour about refusing to bid, so you get a cheap price.
It wouldn’t work if there are people aside from the brokers at the exhibition.

It would be cheating.
Have stories come out about such things?
Aren't there brokers who commit fraud?

"Okay. You can come to the auction hall and watch. There is a registration fee that needs to be paid when you enter, though that is refunded if you participate in bidding. However, do not participate in bidding on the Sacred Spear."
"So I can come?"
"Yes."
"Thanks for doing this."

We go to the hall.
It will be good to experience this today before the holiday's auction.

"I think the Sacred Spear will be shown in 20-30 minutes."

I still seem to have some time on my hands.
I returned to the house briefly, and told Roxanne I'd be a bit late.
I turned around and went straight back to the merchants guild.
It only took a few seconds to travel because I was using [Warp].

I climbed the stairs to the second floor of the merchants guild.
A large conference room is on the second floor.
The auction seems to be held there.

"It's here?"
"Yes."

Luke leads me inside.
It's a considerably spacious room.
There is a stage at the front, and chairs facing it.
It feels like a small theater.

I sit down next to Luke.
There aren't many people in the room.
Maybe 20-30?
Hundreds of people could fit if it was full.

"Then, I'll start the auction. The first item today is the pig monster card. It's been confirmed by the guild."

A man stood at the left side of the stage.
Another man entered, and put the card on the table at the center of the stage.
The pig monster card.
He must be the seller.

“If it is cheap I will make a bid for it. You can too. We will lose our registration fee if we don’t bid.”

Luke whispers in my ear.

“The starting bid is 1,000 nars.”
“1,000.”

As soon as the man on the left side of the stage indicated, someone called out at once.

“1,100.”
“1,200.”
“1,300.”

The bidding increments are 100 nars because it is less than 10,000 nars.

“Since it’s the first item shown, it has 100 nar increments so a lot of people can participate.”
“Oh.”
“1,400.”
“1,500.”

The auction progresses.

“1,600.”

I raised my voice boldly.

“1,700”

Luke calls out next.
Are you looking out for me?

A person in charge comes straight over, and passes a slip of paper to Luke & I.

It’s papyrus.
Something is written on it.

“What’s this?”
“You can turn this in when you leave the hall as proof that you participated and get your registration fee returned.”

I see.
It’s proof of participation.

The bid price kept increasing by 100 nars.
When it got to 2,500 the bids started slowing in speed.

“2,800. The current bid is 2,800. Are there any more?”
“2,900.”
“3,000.”
“As I thought, it’s gotten a little higher.”

Luke mutters as he watches the auction.

“3,100.”

Someone calls out again, but then it goes quiet.

“3,100. The current price is 3,100. Are there any more bids? … No… The successful bid is 3,100 nars. The seller and the bidder, please make the exchange in the back room and perform confirmation on the item.”

The successful bidder has been decided.
The seller who appeared on stage leaves with the monster card, and the bidder also leaves through a door at the front right.

“This is an auction?”

There isn’t really any difference with auctions on Earth.
Since the purpose is the same, they turned out similar.

“The next item today is the coral monster card. It’s been confirmed by the guild. The starting bid is 1,000 nars.”

The next seller shows up and puts a monster card on the table.
The price increases in 100’s from 1000 nars again, and then at last it

finishes.
This repeats several times.

“All the people in the hall have probably participated now, so the bidding gets serious from here.”

Luke whispers.
Bids increase by 10% for the starting range of 1,000 nars.
There wasn’t anyone that raised a bid by 1,000 nars, but there were plenty of people that raised by 100 nars.

“The next item shown is the Sacred Spear. Since it is a piece of equipment, the guild has not confirmed it, so please be careful.”

The Sacred Spear is finally here?
The seller appears at the chairman’s introduction.
The seller does not have a family name.

It doesn’t seem to have been brought by someone from the Baradam house.
A substitute has come to sell it.
Is it a servant or a butler?
The seller puts the Sacred Spear on the table.

Sacred Spear: Skills [Empty] [Empty] [Empty] [Empty] [Empty]

“Oh!”

I called out by accident.

Chapter 115 - The Condition

After seeing the Sacred Spear at the auction, I subconsciously uttered a cry.
I did so because the weapon had 5 empty skill slots.

Amazing, amazing, amazing!
This Sacred Spear holds 5 empty skill slots.
It is quite spectacular to see this number of skill slots.

I was not prepared for something like this to be exhibited.
As expected of an auction, there is a higher probability of seeing items with multiple empty skill slots here.
No, this hypothesis might be wrong.
As I am the only one with the [Appraisal] skill, only I can see the skill slots and not be deceived.

“Well then, to start the bidding of the Sacred Spear, the minimum bid price is 150,000 Nars. Please, let’s start.”

The auction is starting.
The minimum bid price is 150,000 Nars.
Is this expensive or not?
A subtle air is flowing through the hall.

As time passed, the atmosphere became heavier.
Not everyone can afford to bid here.
It was natural for other brokers not to have a go, but even the broker who bought the Kobold Monster Card didn’t try to bid.

“Is the price high?”

I asked Luke.
If it is too expensive, there is a possibility that it won’t find a buyer.
If nobody bids, I’ll go for it.
It seems that the brokers all agree not to compete for it, but is it okay if no one buys it?

“I don’t think so.”

Luke was negative.

“150,000 Nars. Someone?”
“150,000”

As the seller’s expression changes, the auction officer looks to confirm the bidder.
Was the strategy to bid at the very last minute?
It’s normal to jump at such a bargain price. That no broker actually went for it is weird.
It would be a different story if it were an expensive item.
The seller displays an expression of relief.
Nobody follows up on the bid.
As it stands, it will be sold at this price.
150,000 Nars might really be a low price.
I want to raise my hand so much but I endure it.
I can not antagonize all these brokers.

“150,000 once, 150,000 twice. Nobody else…? Then… the Sacred Spear goes to the bidder with the bid of 150,000 Nars.”

Hence, the 150,000 Nars bid was declared the winning bid for the Sacred Spear.
The seller dropped his shoulders in disappointment due to the low selling price.

“Which one is more expensive, Sacred Spear or a staff with [MP Absorption] skill?”

I made sure that the person collecting the Sacred Spear went to the backstage and asked Luke in a low voice.
Assuming that the fusion of a monster card succeeds once out of ten times; adding the price of ten Kobold Monster Cards and Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Cards, and the price of the staff; shouldn’t a staff with [MP Absorption] skill cost about 150,000 Nars?

“In any other case, a Sacred Spear would fetch more, of course.”
“What about this Sacred Spear?”
“Considering its price, 150,000 Nars, a staff with [MP Absorption] skill would cost more.”
“Is that so? I need a favor from you, then.”

150,000 Nars is a fairly low price, after all.
Then, after having made up my mind, I approach Luke.

“What?”
“I’d like to propose an exchange to the successful bidder of the Sacred Spear. The Sacred Spear vis-a-vis a staff with [MP Absorption] skill.”
“No way! Do you have it?”
“I can arrange one.”

I already have a Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, a Kobold Monster Card, and a staff with an empty skill slot;
So it is possible to make a staff with [MP Absorption] skill.
The Sacred Spear is now being replaced by the next item of the auction.
Ah, I should have bid.
It’s too late now. I can only remember the sweet embrace of my mother’s arm.

“I understand.”
“I would like to exchange an [MP Absorption] weapon for the Sacred Spear. As the spear’s price was low, there might be some room for profit. I entrust the negotiation with the other party to you, Luke. You can take the commission from the difference.”

The Sacred Spear went for a low price.
Hence, Luke could come up with the offer of a staff with [MP Absorption] skill plus 10,000 Nars in exchange for the Sacred Spear.
I leave the details of the deal to Luke’s discretion.
He would not go for it if he can’t make any profit out of it.

“Are you fine with it?”
“Whether you can get any money out of the deal or not depends entirely on your skill. I would rather go with the one-to-one exchange.”
“I see. Although the Sacred Spear is a good weapon, this time, it went for less. As a wand, staff is adequate. Now, if you absolutely want a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill, would you choose a staff with [MP Absorption] skill or a Sacred Spear, the fusion in which case may or may not be successful…?”

Luke calculates the prospects while muttering.
If the goal of the bidder is not the Sacred Spear but a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill, he will agree to this deal.
As a matter of fact, they would be able to get a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill if they try since the Sacred Spear has empty skill slots.
Well, the other party doesn't know that, so they should not decline the deal.

"How about it?
"Certainly. Let's talk later, then. The successful bidder is also a broker. Because it is necessary for him to report it to his customer, I don't expect a quick answer."
"Contact me if there's a reply. For now, I will return home. This auction served as a good experience. Thank you for today."
"Same here. Thank you very much."

I parted with Luke and got out of the auction hall.
At the reception desk, I submitted the papyrus, the proof of my participation in the bidding, and left.
I arrived at home from the living room's wall.

"I am back."
"Did something bad happen? It took you quite some time."
"No, don't worry about it."

I have spent an unexpectedly long time in the merchants' guild, but I quickly psyche myself up as I enter the labyrinth.
We went hunting on Haruba's 17th floor.
The exploration progressed quite smoothly.
The monsters we encountered the most on 17th floor were Kettle Mermaids paired up with Clamshells, that are both weak against earth magic.
Hence, this level can be classified as easy.
It is not as easy as Quratar's 16th floor, though.

Since I had already obtained a white crystal, there was no need for [Crystalization] skill, so I was able to reset the bonus points.
I allocated the points toward [Increase in Gained Experience] skill, obviously.

Thanks to that, Roxanne finally leveled up to Warrior Lv30.

I check Roxanne's jobs via [Party Job Settings].
Roxanne has acquired the Knight job.

As expected, Warrior Lv30 seems to be the condition to acquire Knight job.
That's great.

Warrior Lv30, Beast Warrior Lv32, Village Chief Lv1, Monk Lv2, Villager Lv8, Farmer Lv1, Swordsman Lv1, Explorer Lv1, Herbalist Lv1, Merchant Lv1, Assassin Lv1, Knight Lv1.

What is this frightful job called Assassin?
I've never seen it before.
When did Roxanne get involved in assassination?
Actually, It might not be farfetched if it is Roxanne.
Many warriors seem to have already died at her hands.
Roxanne is a scary girl.

"Umm, what is it?"

No, wait.
It was also assassination when I killed those thieves.
For Roxanne to become an assassin now, it might be that Warrior Lv30 is required like in case of Knight.
That said, because I am a Warrior Lv30, too, assassination does not seem to be the condition to acquire this job.

"Let's go home and rest."
"Yes, certainly."

I dodged the question and return home at once.
What is the condition to acquire Assassin job?
Before that, I should immediately get the Village Chief job.
I take all the contents out of my Item Box.

"Is there something wrong ?"

Sherry asks me with cold eyes.
No, it's not her eyes that are cold.
It's I who's being paranoid.

“A little experiment. Does Sherry want to take part as well?”
“Then I have to take all the items out of my Item Box, too?”

Sherry accepted quickly.
Is it okay for her to accept so readily?
She’s still giving me those cold eyes.
I should distract her or she‘ll be even more suspicious of what is coming next.

“Wait a moment.”

I remember that I have a Caterpillar Monster Card and a Misanga.
It is one of the Misangas Sherry made and I kept it because it had an empty skill slot.

I take it out from my Item Box and pass it along with the monster card to Sherry.

“You want me to fuse it?”
“Please do. Well then, Roxanne, face me and say Appointment.”
“Appointment?”
“Yes.”

I asked Roxanne to say that after I had changed her job to Knight Lv1, of course.
Making her do it will be quicker than explaining it.
An incantation should float up inside Roxanne’s head after saying Appointment.

“Appointment… What?”

The expression on Roxanne’s face changed.
It seems to have gone well.

“This is a knight’s skill. Roxanne is a knight now.”
“Err… am I a knight?”
“This skill allows a knight to appoint someone as a village’s chief.”

Addressing the confused Roxanne, Sherry who had successfully fused the monster card, handed the Sacrificial Misanga over to me.
As expected, Sherry seems to know about the [Apointment] skill.

“Is that so? Thank you. As expected of Sherry.”
“I thought that to become a knight, one needed many years of training as a warrior. But Roxanne has been a warrior only for a short period of time.”
“As expected of Master.”
“Master, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria overwhelmed the skeptical Sherry.
Sherry looks at me with doubtful eyes.

“No, that must be so because it’s Roxanne.”
“Indeed, if it’s Roxanne.”

She agreed on that.
I can understand why.

“As expected of Onee-chan, desu.”
“Umm, do you want me to appoint you, Master?”
“Please do.”
“Rule of the emperor who rules the world?…”

Roxanne tried the incantation.
It didn’t work.
There seems to be a problem with Brahim words.

“I’ll try it first, so listen well.”
“Okay, understood.”
“The emperor who rules the heaven and the earth, let them reign without resistance — Appointment.”

I was facing Sherry while I recited the incantation of the [Appointment] skill out loud.
Since I had cancelled [Incantation Omission] skill before selecting the Knight job, i was able to see the incantation.
Sherry’s job is now Village Chief Lv1.

“As expected of Master. I will try to repeat the incantation now.”

Roxanne recited the incantation while facing me.
When I checked, my first job was Village Chief Lv1.
Just like I thought, [Appointment] takes the first job’s place.
In case you have Explorer as your first job, your Item Box needs to

be empty. I was right to have emptied it.

“Oh, well done, Roxanne.”
“Thank you very much.”
“Err… it should be prohibited for a knight to appoint a village’s chief without permission. Did I become a village chief, too ?”

Sherry interrupts.
Prohibited, huh?
Sounds logical.
If everybody appointed a village chief at their own discretion, it would cause chaos.

“No, not anymore.”

I had already switched her job back to Master Smith.

“It’s alright. It’s a secret, so no one will be able to find out. Okay, Miria?”
“Secret, desu.”

Well, nobody will find out as long as I don’t select it as my first job.
I am not even sure about selecting it at all as it doesn’t seem to be useful in combat.
Because it’s a useless job, is that why any knight can appoint someone as a village’s chief, perhaps?

“Well, that’s that, but…”
“Sherry, do you know about the Assassin job?”

I asked the bored Sherry.
Assassin seems to be more useful than Village Chief.

“It is a pretty unusual job. If I remember correctly, it deals with poison. It is said that assassins fight with a weapon imbued with poison.”

Poison, huh?
True, Roxanne has indeed killed many using poison already.
I have yet to use poison.
If poison is the condition, it is a given that I don’t have the Assassin job even though I am a Warrior Lv30.

I checked the Assassin's job effects through [Party Job Settings].

Assassin Lv1
Effects | Small Increase in Intelligence | Small Increase in Spirit
Skills | Increased Chance of Inflicting Abnormal Status | Resistance against Abnormal Status

Since the job is related to abnormal status, poison really seems to be the condition of acquiring it.
It also gives two effects, both of which grant small increase in interesting stats.
Are Intelligence and Spirit the stats that are affected by abnormal status?

Intelligence is related to magic, too.
I have already tested that my magic attack power increases with the increase in Intelligence.
That's great.
Since it also profits other party members, it is quite useful.
This [Resistance to Abnormal Status] skill looks really interesting.
It has two skills related to abnormal status. One is [Resistance to Abnormal Status]. Is the second skill, [Increased Chance of Inflicting Abnormal Status], related to attack?
You might need to use poison with your weapon for this skill to be of any use, though.
[Resistance to Abnormal Status] might become useless if we get some equipment with similar resistance.
We already have a hard leather hat that provides protection against poison.
It's quite a useful job nonetheless. I should try to acquire it.

"That's good. Let's do an experiment."
"Umm, what experiment?"
"The experiment is killing a monster using poison. Sherry, the monster native to Haruba's 10th floor was NT Ant, right?"
"That's right."

I put all the items I took out back in my Item Box and head to Haruba's 10th floor.

Explorer Lv43 | Hero Lv40 | Wizard Lv42| Monk Lv42 | Alchemist Lv33
Equipment | Rod of Offerings | Hard Leather Hat | Alba | Dragon Leather Gloves | Dragon Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | Female | 16 years old
Knight Lv1
Equipment | Estoc | Steel Shield | Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Dragon Leather Jacket | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes of Willow | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | Female | 16 years old
Master Smith Lv33
Equipment | Steel Spear of Authority | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail |
Water Resistant Leather Mittens | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Miria | Female | 15 years old
Diver Lv32
Equipment | Rapier | Iron Shield | Strengthened Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail |
Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne's job is now Knight Lv1.
It won't affect her much, though, as she rarely gets hit.
This time, we won't be using the increased resistance to abnormal status given by the Assassin job.
I expect the battles to be drawn out, so the Alchemist job is needed.

"Because you only just became a knight, Roxanne, be careful. Well then, guide us to a place with a lot of NT Ants, please."
"Understood."

Well, it's needless to tell Roxanne to be cautious.
We hunt NT Ants and collect the poison stingers.

"Can we really kill NT Ants using their own poison?"
"Of course."
"Absolutely."

Apparently, the NT Ants' poison will work on them.
Since the experienced Roxanne and Sherry are the ones saying so, it should work.
Because NT Ants have a skill attack, I need to avoid a drawn out battle.
If it becomes too troublesome, we'll retreat to a lower level to rest.

I have no idea as to how many stingers I need to shoot in order to poison an NT Ant.
On Haruba's 10th floor, there are Escape Goats, too, which is not particularly good as it will run away the moment the poison damage exceeds a certain limit.
NT Ant is a better experimental subject.

When we were collecting the stingers, I was able to take out NT Ants with just one shot of water magic.
I don't think it would be possible to take them out with one shot even if it were weak against water magic.
I seem to have become stronger over time.

Chapter 116 - Assassin

“Well then, let’s get the experiment started. Roxanne has it already, so I’ll be the one to shoot the poison stingers. You three won’t be attacking.”

I have about twenty poison stingers.
Shooting a poison stinger doesn’t necessarily inflict poison but with this many, there shouldn’t be any problem.

“If it constructs magic formation, what should I do?”
“If that happens, thrust your spear.”

I answer Sherry’s question.

“If you dodge NT Ant’s skill attack, you won’t get poisoned.”

Yeah, if I were Roxanne.
I look toward Sherry and nod. She acknowledges it.

When a group of three NT Ants enters my line of sight, I cast [Waterstorm].
Two of them drop down immediately. One’s still standing.
I wait for an opportunity to shoot a poison stinger at the surviving NT Ant.

Back then, Roxanne perhaps didn’t poison the monster with the finishing blow. It was probably taken out by getting poisoned at the beginning.
If I take a monster out by poisoning it at the end, it’s likely that I won’t acquire Assassin.
Still, there’s no harm in trying it.

If you finish a monster off with bare hands, you acquire Monk.
There’s a possibility that it’s same in case of Assassin, too.
No matter how you look at it, taking a monster out by poisoning it at the start is difficult.

Roxanne holds her shield and stands in front of the NT Ant.

Ah, if Roxanne can keep it company, there won't be any need for Sherry to cancel its skill attack.
I look at Sherry and signal her to not use the spear. She acknowledges it.
However, if Roxanne keeps it company, there's a possibility that it won't be considered as 'taking a monster out by poisoning it at the start'.

"Now that I think about it, how do I know that the poison has been inflicted successfully?"
"When a monster gets poisoned, its color pales a bit."

While shooting a poison stinger, I ask Sherry. Roxanne dodges an attack of the NT Ant.
Is it even possible to notice the change in color of a monster in this dark labyrinth?
Did it fail?

"Poison, desu."

When I shoot the poison stinger, Miria shouts.
At the same time, the NT Ant collapses.

"Did its color change?"
"Yes, desu."

Miria seemed to have noticed it.
I don't get it.
The NT Ant collapsed immediately. Did its HP become zero with the first poison attack?
This is most likely so because I had already whittled its HP down with a magic attack.

I open [Job Settings] interface and check my jobs out.
I have successfully acquired Assassin Lv1.
Inflicting poison with the finishing blow seems to be acceptable.

"Well then, next will be Sherry."
"Understood."

I have Sherry follow suit.
The NT Ant I just took out dropped a poison stinger, of course.

So our stock of poison stingers has been replenished immediately.

The next group comprises two NT Ants and an Escape Goat.
After drawing them close, I cast [Waterstorm].
Both the NT Ants drop down. The Escape Goat is still standing.

Damn it!
Both the ants are dead.
I chase the Escape Goat with a [Waterball].
It collapses in two spells.

We got to increase the stock, at least. We proceed to the next location.
The next group comprises two NT Ants.
I take one of them out with a water spell.

“Spear.”
“Okay.”

I receive the spear from Sherry and hand her the poison stingers.
Sherry slants a bit from behind Roxanne and shoots a poison stinger at the ant.
While Roxanne lightly wards off the NT Ant’s attack, Sherry shoots another poison stinger.

“Here it comes.”

Right after she announces that, Roxanne hurtles back.
Sherry and I, who were standing behind her respectively with the poison stingers and the spear, immediately withdraw.

Woah!
Even though it had its back toward us, it was so quick, it felt like it had an eye on its back.

I rush back.
When I had covered about five meters, I looked behind to find Sherry and Miria in tow.
Roxanne, however, had stopped midway.

Roxanne didn’t fall back all the way.
She probably knew from her experience.

I go back to Roxanne.
The NT Ant had already collapsed.

“Did it get poisoned?”
“Yes, desu. Last shot, desu.”

Sherry seemed to have inflicted poison with the poison stinger she shot last.
Because she doesn’t have Warrior Lv30, she can’t acquire Assassin.
The only problem is that I’m unable to confirm the status but it can’t be helped.

“I was of the idea that its skill attack can’t be dodged. How did you do it?”
“It was rather a feat than an evasive maneuver.”

I return the spear to Sherry.
Constructing a magic formation requires time.
During that time, you can get out of the range of its attack. Is that what she means?
It surely can’t be called an evasive maneuver.

But it will be difficult to accomplish for anyone other than Roxanne.
I was able to escape successfully because I was in the back to begin with.

“As expected of Onee-chan, desu. Well done, desu.”

For Roxanne to not give up, this positivity of Miria may be needed.

“Err… its skill attack can be avoided. Sherry and Miria can do it, too.”

Can they, really?
In Roxanne’s dictionary of evasion, there’s no such word as impossible.
I unintentionally look toward Sherry.

“M-Mira is next.”
“Yes, desu.”

Because there still are more than ten poison stingers left and two

more have just been recovered, I decide to carry on.
The next group comprises four NT Ants.
Only one of them will be spared.

I cast [Waterstorm].
Two of them collapse immediately.
I launch [Waterball] at one of the remaining two.

Roxanne steps forward and blocks the last one.
Miria shoots a poison stinger from behind Roxanne.
I'm standing behind Miria, holding the poison stingers.

"Here."

Miria turns the upper half of her body and receives another poison stinger from me.
It's to allow us to run away if needs be.
Roxanne easily sidesteps the charge of the NT Ant.

"Poison, desu."

When I try to hand her one more poison stinger, she stops me.
Do they become prone to poison after constructing a magic formation?
Roxanne receives the charge of the NT Ant with her shield.

I wonder if its color has changed.
I can't notice any change.
Has it paled?

Roxanne lightly dodges the next attack of the ant.
The ant collapses.
It did get poisoned, it seems.

Now, all the members of our party can acquire Assassin.
Because Miria is a vanguard, it will probably be of use to her.
Once her set of equipment is complete, I will have her become an assassin.

After the experiment was over, we continued to hunt on Haruba's 17th floor until we returned home in the evening.
When we arrive at home, we find Luke's message at the entrance.

“Master, there’s a message from Luke. He asks of you to visit him as soon as possible.”

It’s most likely related to the Sacred Spear.
I wonder if there’s a response of some sort.
I think it’s too early, though, for the buyer’s broker to contact us.
I shouldn’t make fun of someone else’s broker or it may anger them.

…
I don’t want to go but if it’s about what I think it’s about, there’s no other choice.
Because he asked of me to visit him as soon as possible, I decide to go meet to him immediately.

“Well then, I’ll be leaving for the merchants’ guild.”
“Okay. Take care.”

I jump to the waiting room of the merchants’ guild.
Luke comes over immediately after I called for him.

There’s one more person with him.
Weapons Merchant Lv8.
He appears to belong to a well-off family.
He has this air of nobility about him.

Is he here to appraise the staff with [MP Absorption] skill?
But I didn’t bring it.
In fact, I haven’t even made it yet.

“Ah, I have been waiting for you. Would you please come with me?”
“I understand.”

We head to the meeting room.
I take a seat. Luke sits across from me. The man takes a seat next to Luke.

“This is the broker I talked to you about.”
“Is it true that you have a staff with [MP Absorption] skill?”

The man cuts to the chase right after the greetings.
Is he the broker who made the successful bid for the Sacred Spear?
I couldn’t see him properly during the auction.

Why is he in such a hurry to call me so urgently?
Why did he have to go to this extent?

“It’s true.”
“Well then, you must know the name of the weapon with [MP Absorption] skill, right?”

The man questions my integrity.
When you attach [2x Increase in Intelligence] skill to a rod, it becomes the Rod of Offerings. When you attach [Incantation Delay] skill to a copper sword, it becomes the Copper Sword of Obstruction. There’s a predefined naming scheme.
There must be one for [MP Absorption] skill, too.
I don’t know, obviously, because I haven’t made it yet.

Am I supposed to know it’s name if I have it?
Am I, really?
For example, the Duke of Harz’s Ring of Determination. It’s his family’s heirloom, passed down from generation to generation.
It won’t be unusual if he doesn’t know its name.

“Because I made it myself, I don’t know its name. Even though I don’t know, if there’s a trusted weapons merchant around, there won’t be any problem.”

I tell him honestly that I don’t know.
Actually, no. I haven’t made it yet but this weapons merchant doesn’t know that.
I’m not honest at all.

Also, I can’t say that it’s an heirloom because it won’t look old from any angle.
Furthermore, he may use this fact to bargain the price down.
Even if I will later be required to show it, I will be able to claim that it’s new because I have already told them that I made it myself.

“Very well. Then, why would you let go of such a precious weapon that you made after taking great pains?”

If I say that I don’t need it, I will be giving him an even bigger reason to bargain the price down.

If I made it myself, why would I let go of it? Problem.
If it's an heirloom, it must be old. Problem.
If I stole it, I must know its name.
Therefore, if I know its name, it will be suspected to be a stolen item. Problem.

It seemed like a simple question at first but it's actually quite a tricky one.
As you would expect from a broker.
Cunning.

"I have a shrine maiden in my party who can use spear. In strengthening her, the Sacred Spear will be considerably helpful. It's an opportunity I stumbled upon after taking great pains."
"I see. Do you have the staff with you?"
"I don't."

I seem to have deceived him successfully.

"I want to have it immediately. Is it possible?"
"I can bring it right now but have you received the approval from your client?"
"To tell you the truth, who needs a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill is my own house. It has been decided for the heir of the main house to receive his mistress."
"That's great."

So the broker's client is actually the broker's own house, huh?
Well, there's no need for approval, then.
If he's part-broker part-client,
Then he must have been entrusted with the procurement task.

"It has been decided for a weapon with [MP Absorption] skill to be presented at the marriage ceremony. The task was commissioned to an acquainted master smith. However, there has been no success. Although the Sacred Spear is an excellent weapon, if I can get the staff with [MP Absorption] skill in its exchange, it'll be a good deal. After it has been appraised, I'm willing to exchange the weapons at your terms."

So the staff with [MP Absorption] skill will be used as a betrothal

gift, huh?
Because it has to be arranged before the marriage, he would definitely like to have it as quickly as possible.
I leave my seat.

“I understand. I’ll bring it right away.”
“Please.”

I head back to the waiting room to use [Warp].
It’s annoying of them to follow along to see me off.
I prefer to use [Warp] in peace when no one’s around.
I read the incantation of [Field Walk] out loud and use [Warp].

“Sherry, fuse this, please.”

After taking the items out, I call out to Sherry who was preparing dinner.
If it’s Sherry, the [Monster Card Fusion] will be easy as pie.
Before dinner.
I put the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, the Kobold Monster Card and the staff with an empty skill slot on the table.

“Are you sure about the cards?”
“It’s fine.”
“If the fusion fails, you won’t get the cards back.”

I was of the idea that she no longer feels uneasy about [Monster Card Fusion] but it doesn’t seem to be the case.
Even the limitless sand may vanish from a beach but worries will not. (TN: Hama no massago, a Japanese proverb which means that the grains of sand on a beach are innumerable.)

“You’re onboard a large ship, Sherry, don’t worry.” (TN: Oobune ni notta you, another Japanese proverb which means that you’re safe.)
“I have been doing it casually until now but…”
“You don’t need to tell me. My memory isn’t shabby.”
“…”

As long as she doesn’t lose her focus due to her doubts, there’s no problem.
Sherry takes a seat and reluctantly picks the staff up in her hands.

She performs the [Monster Card Fusion].

“Ooh, it’s a success. As expected of Sherry- no, as expected of my memory.”

It doesn’t mean that my memory was used.
So, don’t look at me with questioning eyes.

Or was my memory actually used, perhaps?

I used it.
I definitely used it.
If my memory serves me right, I used my memory.

“Thank you very much. It’s possible, though, that a different skill has been attached.”

Still doubting, huh?
Had Roxanne praised her in my stead, it would have been a different case, I’m certain.
Unfortunately, she’s in the kitchen, not here.

I praise her myself because there’s no other option, and receive the wand from Sherry.
[MP Absorption] skill has successfully been attached to the staff.
Soul Sucker Staff, huh?
Quite an exaggerated name.

Chapter 117 - Memory

I returned to the merchants guild with the Soul Sucker Staff.
Two brokers were waiting in the waiting room.
They look relieved when they see me holding the cane.

Were they worried that I wouldn't come back?
You can see that they were concerned.

It took a little time since I had to get Sherry to fuse it.
They might have thought I ran away because I didn't have the staff with [MP absorption] prepared.
I've got Sherry so it's fine, you don't need to think anything bad about me.

"Sorry, it took me a little time to find it."
"Let's go back to the room."

We entered the conference room, and I passed the Soul Sucking Staff to the weapons merchant.
He recites the incantation of weapon analysis.

"This certainly is a Soul Sucking Staff. There's no doubt."
"Oh."

There can't be any doubt.

"The name of a weapon with [MP absorption] becomes Soul Sucking."
"Soul Sucking? I'll remember it. I have a good memory."
"It's in good condition too, not even a scratch. There's nothing to hinder our business, so here."

The man recites another incantation and opens his item box.
He takes the Sacred Spear out.
I can see the five empty skill slots.
They haven't swapped it.

"How shall I confirm the Sacred Spear? I don't want to risk a

counterfeit item since I am a broker. I can call an acquaintance weapons merchant if that suits you?”

Luke makes a suggestion.
I know that it’s the Sacred Spear because of [Analyze], but normally someone wouldn’t know.
Do I have to confirm it?
There is a weapons merchant here, but he’s on the sellers side.

Can an acquaintance of Luke be trusted?
The acquaintance might be conspiring with the seller.
Even Luke is a broker, so there might be the possibility they are cooperating together.
The doubts are endless.

“There’s no need to go that far. There’s no mistaking that shape and shine. This is definitely the Sacred Spear I desired after seeing it in the auction hall. My memory is quite good.”
“I don’t have a problem with it, are you sure it’s alright?”
“You checked it after you bought it right?”

I ask the man.
When he bought it from the Baradam’s exhibitor, he would have checked it with [Analyze Weapon].
After he bought it, and Luke spoke to him, there would have been no further contact with the Baradam house.

“Of course.”
“Then there’s no problem.”

I received the Sacred Spear.
The Sacred Spear with five empty skill slots.
It’s annoying, but I used the incantation when I opened my item box.
The man also put away the Soul Sucking Staff in his item box.

“I was quite impressed with the way you handled yourself. You weren’t surprised when I checked the weapon at all. Quite splendid. I was part of a good trade.”
“Is that so?”

I knew that he was a weapons merchant.

Should I have been surprised when he suddenly checked the weapon.

“Well then, I’ll take my leave.”

The man greets Luke, and then turns to leave.

“Oh, before you go, did you have the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, and the Kobold Monster Card?”
“The Monster Cards? I have them.”

He has them?
The two monster cards are required for the skill [MP absorption], but they don’t always appear in the auction.
If you wanted to fuse them, you’d normally have at least one already.

“You got the Soul Sucking Staff, so you probably don’t need them anymore, right?”
“That’s right.”
“While we are doing business, could I possibly buy those monster cards?”
“Hmmm. I no longer need them. I bid quite a high price for them, but I was already prepared to sell them at a loss if I returned them to the auction.”

The man looked to Luke as he informed me.
Luke gives a nod to say “I don’t mind.”.
Should I assume that it’s bad for a guest to make deals without permission?
The brokers maintain their strength by standing together.

“Well…”
“I have both the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card, and the Kobold Monster Card. You can have them for 4,000 nars each if your interested.”
“I’d like to buy them both.”

He has them both?
I’m lucky.

“Thanks, that will help me out. It’s already quite late today, so lets handle this business in the morning.”

“Okay.”
“I’ll see you in the morning then.”

He doesn’t seem to be carrying the monster cards at the moment.
I thought he’d have them in his item box.
The date for our business has been decided, and he leaves the room.

“I’m sorry to have business without permission.”
“No, there’s profit in being shrewd. I have no problem with it.”
“Is that how it is?”

I apologized to Luke when only the two of us remained.

“His house seems to be quite wealthy. Was it alright that you didn’t have the item checked?”
“It’s fine.”
“I’ve heard that the people of their house are quite talented.”

There’s that too.
Hmmm.
Should I ask?
Maybe we should talk about that.

There’s no problem for me since I have [Analyze], but how does someone act that doesn’t have it?
It’s good to check in a situation like this with someone I can trust a bit.
Thinking about retaliation after the event might be more common.

If it turns out you have a fake item, you can just retaliate.
On an evening with moonlight.
Well… there’s no moonlight in this world.

Even if it wasn’t an especially dark night, I could have a duel because I’m a freeman.
I can take revenge legally if I am deceived.
This might be a common idea in this world.
Luke never brings fake monster cards either. Does he fear retaliation?

But, the opponent is a wealthy house.

When you issue a duel to them, they can substitute a person with a representative.
If you are rich, you can get a strong guy.
Is it possible to take revenge?

I don't need to worry about it, because I know it's alright.

"I heard that they are a quite strong house, and they are likely to increase in strength more in the future. That's why they want the weapon with [MP Absorption]."
"I see."

I don't really understand it..

"Had you fused those monster cards a while ago?"

Luke asks about it.
That's right. I said I made the weapon with [MP Absorption].
I didn't buy the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card from Luke.
He probably thinks I made it before I started dealing with him.

If I've done dealings before, then it's likely I've been fusing for a long time.
If I've been fusing for a long time, then it's likely I'll keep making orders with Luke.
If I'm skilled at it, then he can expect more dealings in the future.
Is it natural that he's interested?

Like the man who wanted a weapon with [MP absorption], there may be other clients who would request an item with a specific skill.
If he can use me well, then Luke would get a large profit.
I'd receive some of the profit as well.

"My fusing is… well, there are a lot of failures… it isn't that easy."
"Yeah, that seems to be the case."

I deceived him.
I can't be seen as that useful.
I can't show off a 100% success rate, that would cause problems if I end up failing.
If I continue to deal with Luke for monster cards and equipment it's a

two way relationship and it will last well that way.

It might have been good before I managed to make the white magic crystal.
Now that I've made it I don't have any trouble with money, so I don't need to worry about it.
When you have no money, you won't think of any good money making ideas. When you do have money you can think of a good idea without worry.
That's how it works.

"It should be easier to get the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card now, please try to get it."
"Sure."

I placed an order for the Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card with Luke.
The price should settle down now that that house is no longer buying it.
After placing the order, I return to the house.

"Do nobles often receive items with skills attached to them as betrothal gifts?"

While having dinner with the three girls, I asked Sherry about it.
The Soul Sucking Staff was meant to be used as a betrothal gift.
The Duke of Harz also presented the Ring of Determination to Cassia's parents family.

"I don't know much about nobles. I haven't heard of that."
"The weapon with [MP absorption] was meant to be presented to a woman getting married."
"Oh. I see. So it's like that?"

It's like that?
Sherry seems to understand it.

"I don't know where she's a noble from."
"If she's a nobles daughter then she's probably a Wizard. She'll be using the weapon with [MP absorption] herself."
"Even though she's the bride?"

It doesn't seem like a regular betrothal present.
Maybe it's more like a wedding ring?

"Their family is probably increasing in power."
"You understand that much? As expected of Sherry."

Luke said the same thing.

"Master, didn't have to lower the price right."
"Well I wasn't really intending to lower it, but…."

I replied to Roxanne.

"Ah. For a party with a Wizard, their damage output is going to increase."

Did Sherry start explaining because she noticed I didn't understand?

"That's true."
"A Wizard is an indispensable piece for a party aiming to take an active role in the Labyrinth."
"You're probably right."
"However, not everyone can become a Wizard. It is limited to children of nobles and very rich families."

Did they use the suicide pill?
Becoming a Wizard seems quite difficult.

"I've heard about that."
"And even if you raise a Wizard from a baby it takes tens or years for them to become a first class Wizard."
"I understand."

I see.
A Wizard with [MP absorption] will play an active role in the party.

"This is why they are increasing in strength."
"Okay."
"She is probably already quite skilled, but now she will have a better weapon as well."

I pull the Sacred Spear from the item box.

“A spear?”
“A spear.”
“Spear, desu.”
“It’s the spear Sherry said strengthens magic.”

I present the Sacred Spear to Sherry.

“The Sacred Spear? Yes, I remember saying that.”
“It was good to remember.”

I’ll be *punishing* you so hard tonight Sherry that you won’t even be able to think straight.
It’s going to be wild.
TN: The author used torturing instead of punishing, which I assume sounds more erotic in Japanese for this scenario.

“I think the Sacred Spear is considerably valuable.”

Sherry takes it timidly.

“I got it by trading the weapon you fused earlier Sherry, so you’ve contributed to getting it.”
“This is the first time I’ve seen one.”

You’ve never seen one?
There probably aren’t museums or exhibitions for this kind of thing.
There are a lot of things that I have never seen, even on TV.

The next morning we entered the labyrinth to check how easy the Sacred Spear was to use.
Last night, I don’t remember everything that happened when I started *punishing* the girls.
I found Sex Maniac active when I got up in the morning, so I must have *punished* them quite a bit.

The Sacred Spear is only slightly worse than the Rod of Offerings.
Still, that’s awesome.
If it’s only slightly worse with no skills, then it will be amazing after having [2x Intellect] added to it.

“I’ll use the Rod, and we need to keep using the Spear with [Incantation Interruption] as well. It’s a little bit of a waste, but I’ll

have to put this away for now.”
“That’s right. Miria wouldn’t be able to use it as good as the one handed sword, and it wouldn’t be suitable for me.”

It seems that Roxanne and Miria can’t use it either.

“We don’t need [Incantation Interruption] for the Clamshell’s, but we need it for the Kettle Mermaids and Bitch Butterflies. We’ll have to put away the Saint Spear.”

I could give both Spears to Sherry, and have her drop the one she doesn’t need, but that seems a bit worrying.
I will just have to put away the Saint Spear.

Chapter 118 - Defense

After returning from the labyrinth, I head to the Harz duchy to sell the third mirror to the Duke.
For now, this is the last mirror. The duke doesn't have anything to say.
Do you not like Roxanne anymore?
My warning him about taking the matter up to Cassia seems to have taken the desired effect.

Having returned from Bode, I head to the merchants' guild after eating breakfast.
Because I'm not directly acquainted with that weapons merchant, I call for Luke. Two people come over shortly after.

"Ah, I have been waiting for you. Well then, let's head to the guild temple?"
"Guild temple?"
"Yes. It was late yesterday but if the broker is registered, the temple can be used for verification."

The weapons merchant says.
I have an idea what a temple is but what are we verifying? The monster cards?
You can't tell if it's a monster card from just looking at it.
I can tell, however, because I have [Appraisal].

Generally, people use the guild temple for this purpose.
The guild temple can be used for verification, or so I heard.
The reason as to why we couldn't complete the transaction yesterday was not because he didn't have the monster cards but probably because it was evening.

There's a chance for the [Monster Card Fusion] to fail.
The fusion may fail because of a counterfeit monster card. However, it's difficult to distinguish whether the fusion failed because of a counterfeit monster card or not.
For this reason, retaliation can't be completely avoided.

Does Luke not sell counterfeit monster cards to me because he's afraid of retaliation?

We go upstairs, to the backroom on the second floor.
The guild temple seems to be located here.
It's the backside of the auction hall.
Which reminds me, he said earlier that the verification during the auction takes place backstage.

"Here it is. One usage costs 100 Nars. Because there are two cards to be verified, it'll cost 200 Nars. The principle is for the buying side to bear the cost. I'll be the one operating it as only the registered brokers can use the guild temple."

Luke opens the door to the room.
So I have to spend money, huh?
Because I have [Appraisal], I can tell it's genuine without getting it verified but I can't think of an appropriate reason to decline.
Do I really have no choice but to be grateful and use it?

There's a white box in the room.
It's the same guild temple as the one I saw at the Duke of Harz's place.

"Do you want to use the guild temple? Welcome."

When we enter the room, a villager receives us.
I take out two silver coins.
[30% Discount] is not applicable on villagers.

The weapons merchant takes out two monster cards, too.
The Kobold Monster Cards.

"Because you gave me the Soul Sucker Staff, I'll give you a special discount. Two monster cards for 5,600 Nars."

Alright!
With the other party being a weapons merchant, [30% Discount] is effective.
Because it wasn't I whose bid was the winning bid at the auction, it's barely applicable.

Since I already know from [Appraisal] that the cards are genuine, I don't really care about the verification.
Luke places the first monster card on the guild temple and presses a button. The word 'Kobold' comes up in katakana.
Katakana, huh?
Just like in case of an Intelligence Card, it seems to show the letters that are easy-to-read for the reader.

Is this device same as the device used earlier by the order of Harz knights to verify the Intelligence Cards?
The manner of use and the mechanism of operation seems to be the same.
I don't know what exactly the mechanism is, though.

'Kobold' comes up in case of the second card, too, of course.
I said 'of course' because it was a matter of course.

"Indeed. It was nice doing business with you."
"Likewise. Thank you very much."

I express my gratitude to the weapons merchant and return home.
I take out of my Item Box the newly purchased Kobold Monster Card, the Butterfly Monster Card and the Damascus steel forehead protector.
And hand them to Sherry.

"I just bought a Kobold Monster card, Sherry. Can you please fuse it?"
"Yes."

Because I have only just bought it, there can be no mistake about it.
Is that why Sherry doesn't show uneasy expression when I ask her to perform [Monster Card Fusion]?

"Ooh, as expected of Sherry."
"Thank you very much."

The fusion was a success, of course.

Wind Resistant Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Head Equipment
Skills | Wind Resistance | Empty | Empty | Empty

Three skill slots are still empty.
I put the forehead protector on Roxanne's head.

"This will be Roxanne's."
"Are you sure about this?"
"It's fine."
"Thank you very much."

When I join the frontline, I alternate between Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat and Strengthened Hard Leather Hat.
Because you have to fasten a forehead protector like a headband, you can't just put it on like a cap, which is bothersome.
Even before the fusion, it was Roxanne who was using it.
Unlike hat, it doesn't cover her dog ears which I'm uneasy about. But in any case, Roxanne doesn't get hit by the monsters' attacks almost ever.

We gear up and enter the labyrinth.
Shortly after entering, we reach the boss room of Haruba's 17th floor.
The exploration seemed to have advanced considerably.

"The Kettle Mermaid boss is called Bottle Mermaid. Because it shoots powerful water magic, it's important to interrupt it as soon as possible."
"Well then, I'll ask of you three to engage the boss as usual."

After Sherry briefs about the boss in the waiting room, we enter the boss room.
I take on the accompanying Kettle Mermaid.
I invoke [Rush] successively and take it out swiftly.
It tried to use magic during the battle but I interrupted it without any trouble.

Because it pauses its attacks while constructing a magic formation, this type of magic attack is welcome when I use Durandal.
Since it takes too long, even I can cancel it with [Incantation Interruption].

Thereafter, I join the attack on the boss.
Bottle Mermaid is a mermaid with sharp, pointed head.

Just like a bottle.
Unfortunately, Bottle Mermaid is a disappointing mermaid, too, just like Kettle Mermaid.

The four of us surround it and whittle it down.
With Roxanne in the front and Sherry behind her, holding a weapon with [Incantation Interruption] skill, there's no chance for us to lose.
Still, we can't drop our guard.

The Bottle Mermaid extends its left arm out.
Roxanne tilts her neck and dodges it.
The mermaid instantaneously swings its right arm.
Roxanne pulls her shoulder and dodges it.

The Bottle Mermaid hurls its head onto the upper half of Roxanne's body.
Is the attack head butt or bite?
Since Roxanne swayed the upper half of her body and dodged the attack, its intention remains unknown.
Roxanne has successfully sealed all of the Bottle Mermaid's attacks.

In the meantime, I whittle it down using Durandal.
The boss collapses.

I'm grateful for the fact that the boss battles will continue to be like this up to 22nd floor.
Well, if possible, I would like it to continue past 22nd floor.
We set foot on 18th floor.

"The monster native to Haruba's 18th floor is Fly Trap."
"Err… Fly Traps are weak against fire magic but Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells are resistant to fire magic, right?"
"That's right."

My memory is quite something.
The monsters that will appear the most are weak against fire magic but Bitch Butterflies and Clamshells will appear, too.
This floor is a bit difficult.
There won't be any relief even up to 22nd floor, it seems.

"Well then, Roxanne, this floor may be slightly more difficult. I'll leave

it to you.”
“Understood.”

The group Roxanne guides us to comprises a Clamshell, a Kettle Mermaid and a Fly Trap.
After taking out the Clamshell and the Kettle Mermaid in seven earth spells, I finish off the Fly Trap with fourth [Fireball].
With the level of the floor having moved up, the monsters seem to have become stronger.
Oh well, it can’t be helped.

“Like this?”
“That’s right. With Master’s power, there won’t be any problem.”
“It’s the vanguard, though, who’ll have to endure the most. Should we move to Quratar’s 17th floor, then?”
“Go, desu.”

Because the monster native to Quratar’s 17th floor is a fishkin monster, Ma Bream, Miria immediately gets her teeth into it.
We return home, grab the map and enter Quratar’s labyrinth.
We proceed through the labyrinth per map.

“Inside is the boss room.”

While looking at the map, Roxanne extends her arm to point out.
The boss room? Already?
On Quratar’s 17th floor appears Ma Bream, whose weakness is earth magic, and other monsters whose weakness is wind magic.
En route, we didn’t go out of the way too much.

“Until we get two whole fish, we will keep hunting in this area.”
“Okay, desu.”
“Then, I’ll guide to a location with a lot of Ma Breams. This way, please.”

We have yet to get our first whole fish.
For the sake of a delicious meal, we continue to hunt in the vicinity of the boss room.

“Which reminds me, Roxanne is a knight now, so we can make use of her [Defense] skill during the boss battles.”

“[Defense] skill?”
“On Haruba’s 17th floor, the door to the boss room immediately opened, not affording me the time to teach you the skill incantation.”
“But we don’t have any appropriate opponent around here.”

Regrettably, the battles with these small fries are not comparable to the boss battles.
They’re certainly not an appropriate opponent.

“You’re right.”
“However, there’s no knowing what we may come across against in the labyrinth. It’ll be better if I can use it. Can you please teach me?”
“I understand.”
“Please.”

While we were walking in search of Ma Breams, I cancel Monk and select Knight.
If I cancel [Incantation Omission] and call out ‘defense’, the skill incantation will float up inside my head.

“To serve my lord, to not only defend them with my body, but to worship them — Defense.”

While teaching the skill incantation to Roxanne, I cast [Defense].
I wonder if my defense has increased.
What troubles me is, I can’t feel any difference.

“As expected of Master.”
“Brahim language is amazing.”
“As expected, desu.”

Brahim language is superfluous — is what I want to say to Sherry.

“Serve, my lord, worship?”
“That’s worship, yes.”

I teach it to Roxanne.
*In Hokkaido dialect, it (まつろう) can often be confused with まつろ when spoken.
Which refers to those who don’t abide by, those who defy.
まつろ has negative connotation while まつろう has positive connotation, referring to those who worship, those who deify.* (TN:

It was incredibly difficult to translate. And it's still not confirmed to be accurate. You can't expect a machine translator to be a kanji expert. I have requested help, though. I'll edit it later when I receive a more accurate version.)
The essence of a knight.
I take a Ma Bream out after teaching Roxanne the skill incantation.
We continue to hunt until we eventually get two whole fish.

"Yes, desu."

Miria brings the two whole fish over to me.
I receive the fish and put them in my item box.

"Alright. With this, we have our two whole fish. Let's move on to the boss room, then?"
"Understood."

Roxanne walks ahead.
Ah
I know the location of the boss room.
But I can't recall.

No, no.
As we were wandering around inside the cave in search of Ma Breams, I have completely lost track.
It's not a memory issue.
Because we have already reached outside the boss room once, I can use [Dungeon Walk] to jump to the small room outside the boss room but…

"Sherry, do you remember the direction to the boss room?"
"I don't."

Thank god.
Even Sherry says that she doesn't remember.
It's not I whose memory is weak.

"Ah, I feel like I have seen this T-junction before. No, it's probably different. Oh well, I can't tell whether it's the same one or different."
"A while ago, I noticed the smell of a person disappearing from the other side of the door. They entered the boss room, I think."

I see. Roxanne noticed their smell.
That's a foul!
How can she even smell someone from the other side?.
There was a crossroads before the T-junction.

"After passing the crossroads, comes the T-junction. From there, you take left and keep walking. Shortly after, you will reach the boss room."
"That's right. If you turn right, there's a group of Ma Breams. What would you like to do?"
"Let's take them out if they're close by."

While we were on our way, we took some monsters out as well.
I pick the white fish up and return.
Unfortunately, they didn't drop a single whole fish.
Because I had already cancelled Cook, it couldn't be helped.

"The Ma Bream boss is called Black Diamond Tuna. Because its charge is powerful, we need to be careful. It can also use water magic."

When I return, Sherry briefs.

"If we turn right, the place is brimming with the groups of Bitch Butterflies and Grass Bees. What would you like to do?"
"Let's try."

Both of them are weak against wind magic, so it'll be efficient.
After taking out one of the groups, we proceed to the boss room.
In the waiting room, I pull out Durandal.
There's no one in the waiting room but the door to the boss room is closed.

"The party that entered earlier is still fighting, it seems."
"They're taking time."
"Umm, it's normal. I think it's Master who's too strong."
"Is that so?"
"That is so."

When I look at Sherry, she nods, so it really seems to be the case.
Thereafter, we took two more groups out.

Chapter 119 - Shiogama

Because the door is now open, we enter the boss room.
Since there's no boss in the room, the earlier party seemed to have safely killed the boss, although they took quite long.
The door closes and smoke gathers at two points.

Two monsters appear.
That the points where the smoke gathered at were high in the air, it was clear that the accompanying monster would be Bitch Butterfly.
The boss, Black Diamond Tuna, is swimming in the air, too.

It doesn't have feet like Ma Bream has.
It's truly a fish.
A fish that swims in the sky.
It's a monster, after all, so it's not surprising.

"I'll sweep the small fry as usual."
"To serve my lord, to not just defend them with my body, but to worship them — Defense."

Roxanne recites the incantation of [Defense] skill.
Right after, Sherry and Miria confront the boss, too.

I approach the Bitch Butterfly and smash Durandal into it.
The butterfly collapses under the barrage of [Rush]s.
I join the attack on the boss.

As for Black Diamond Tuna, it's a slightly-more-than-one-meter-long fish.
Its name is tuna.
It's black from head to tail and seems to be tough.
Its name is quite strong.

Roxanne dodges a charge from the Black Diamond Tuna.
It's quite fast.
It advances to stab.
I have no confidence in evading it.

It’s a relief that Roxanne can play with it.
I approach it from around the side and smash Durandal into it.
The tuna swings its tail fin and attacks Miria who was standing behind it.
It has such a trick, huh?

Miria crouches half-a-foot down and dodges the attack.
Finding the gap, when the tuna was trying to attack Miria, Sherry thrusts her spear.
I take a hack at it with Durandal, too.

Even if the Black Diamond Tuna can attack front and back, it got nothing to take care of its sides.
Perhaps, it can bend its tail fin up to 90 degrees?
Wielding Durandal, I approach it carefully in order to confirm my conjecture.
The tuna charges at Roxanne.
Roxanne twitches. The tuna’s charge comes to a stop.
While Roxanne was trying to regain her breath, it prepares for another charge.
Was the last one a feint?

Roxanne maneuvers the upper half of her body and dodges it.
During the exchange, Roxanne connects her estoc with the tuna.
Although it used feint, it couldn’t see everything through.
My condolences for the tuna.

When the monster comes to a stop after its exchange with Roxanne, I hammer in a [Rush].
The Black Diamond Tuna convulses and drops down.
It’s lying on the ground.
It looks like a tuna, indeed.

Before long, it turns into smoke and dissipates.
The item it dropped is lean tuna.
So Ma Bream drops white fish while Black Diamond Tuna drops lean tuna?
Miria jumps at it and brings it over with slight disappointment about her face.

“Yes, desu.”

“Is lean tuna no good?”
“Like Ma Bream, Black Diamond Tuna drops a rare item. It’s called fatty tuna.”

Sherry explains the reason to me.
So a tuna’s rare drop is a fatty tuna, huh?

“I see. How do you cook fatty tuna?”
“Stew, desu. Roast, desu.”

So it can either be boiled or roasted?
Like I speculated, there’s no sashimi in this world.

“Since we got whole fish today, tomorrow’s dinner will be the whole fish.”
“Yes ,desu.”

Miria answers brightly.
It’s so easy to dupe her.
She’s shortsighted, just like a monkey.
You tell them that you are reducing the quantity of their feed, that they will get three in the morning and four in the evening, at which they complain. Later, you tell them that they will get four in the morning and three in the evening, upon which they rejoice.

“Because there seem to be less people in Haruba’s labyrinth, we will keep fighting Black Diamond Tuna in Haruba’s labyrinth until we get fatty tuna. Miria will be cooking it.”
“Okay, desu.”

Says Miria even more brightly.
Were you not duped just now?
Although I was intending to change the subject, I seem to have gotten further into it.

Was she just pretending to have been duped?
It was wrong of me to think that she’s shortsighted, it seems.

At this moment, I’m Explorer Lv43.
Upon reaching Explorer Lv 44; after allocating 63 points toward Durandal, 31 points toward Required Experience 1/10th, 31 points toward Gained Experience 10x, a point each toward Shortened

Incantation and Character Reset; I will have 15 points left to allocate. I will then be able to select fifth job.
When I will be able to select fifth job, I will be able to select Cook during the boss battles.

After fighting Black Diamond Tuna in Haruba's labyrinth, I should be able to reach Explorer Lv44.
Thereafter, I'll be able to fulfill Miria's demands.
However, because of [Shortened Incantation], it'll get noisy with the 'Rush, Rush' shouts.

"The monster native to Quratar's 18th floor is Pig Hog.

While we were moving from the boss room to 18th floor, Sherry briefs.

"Pig Hog is resistant to earth magic, right?"
"That's right."

The monster native to 17th floor, Ma Bream, was weak against earth magic but resistant to water magic while Pig Hog is weak against water magic but resistant to earth magic.
Completely opposite.
If both were to appear together, I would be in trouble.

"Roxanne, guide us to a place with both Ma Breams and Pig Hogs. We should try to fight them both once, at least. After that, we will move back to Haruba."
"Understood."

Because Pig Hog is native to 18th floor of Quratar's labyrinth, it will appear on 18th floor the most. Since Ma Bream is native 17th floor, it will appear on 18th floor the second most.
18th floor of Quratar's labyrinth is quite difficult for the weakness and resistance of both the monsters are completely opposite.

Fortunately, I have already fought against Pig Hogs before.
I have already confirmed that [Meteor Crash] is not as effective on Pig Hogs.
After fighting here once, we will move back to Haruba's labyrinth.

We have to explore Haruba's 18th floor. There's no such thing in

Quratar's case.
We can simply go to the boss room of Quratar's 18th floor and proceed to 19th.
That said, because Pig Hog drops pork, I'll be visiting this floor every now and then.
Other than that, it's worthless.

We advance through the cave under Roxanne's guidance.
After taking out two Pig Hogs in seven water spells, I finish off lone Ma Bream with sixth [Sandball].

"Un, I knew that it would be difficult."
"It's not much."

Even though I said that it's difficult, all I do is cast spells from the back.
Even if the duration of battles lengthens, it's the vanguard, Roxanne, who'll bear the brunt.
Since you said that 'it's not much', are you fine with it?

"Well then, let's move to Haruba?"

After the battle in Quratar was over, we move to Haruba's 18th floor.

Next day. We carry on the exploration of Haruba's 18th floor.
We finish the exploration ahead of time.
Cooking being the reason.

"Because I'm already making soup for Miria, I'll ask of you two, Roxanne and Sherry, to make one more dish."
"Understood."
"Since you are cooking the whole fish, I wonder if stir-fried vegetables would do."

Sherry takes nutritional balance into account, it seems.
As you would expect from her.

"That would be great."
"Hopefully. Sherry and I will make stir-fried vegetables, then."
"Alright. Then, Miria will be helping me."
"Yes, desu."

Miria doesn’t seem to have any unpleasant expression about her face.

“Great, Miria.”

Well, this time, it won’t be as laborious a task as blending mayonnaise.
This time, she’ll just have to be a fire watchman.

After returning home, I add some salt to an egg, whip it and spread it on a pan.
As for the salt, it’s kobold salt. Miria was the one who ground it. It’s not a laborious task.
I put the herb-dredged whole fish on the salt. After that, I coat the entire fish with the salt.
It’s shiogama-roasted whole fish.

Because there was some room in the pan still, I put a pork rib next to the whole fish.
With the second whole fish, I make soup.

“I have never seen such a method of cooking. As expected of Master.”
“I’m seeing it for the first time, too.”
“Wow, desu.”

They are surprised to see shiogama-roast.
They have never seen it before, it seems.
Even in Japan, it’s not that common.

“You first put it on fire for 30 minutes. After that, you take it off fire and steam it for an hour. Miria, can you please monitor the fire?”
“Yes, desu.”

I put the pan on fire and entrust it to Miria.
While it was being roasted, I heat the bath.
After heating the bath, I make the whole fish soup.
When you use dropped items as ingredients, it doesn’t produce any lye, so it’s convenient.

“Alright. It’ll soon be ready.”

Having carried the pot containing the soup to the dining table and returned to the kitchen, I announce so after having a look at the shiogama-roast.
Since no cracks can be seen, the shiogama seems to have been roasted well.
I hope that it won't taste burnt.

I stick a knife into the salt.
It's hard.

"Let me do it."

Sherry takes the knife from me.
When Sherry sticks the knife into the shiogama, it splits open.
From inside, comes out a nicely roasted whole fish.

"Ooh!"
"Wow, desu."

It's pretty nicely roasted.
It went well.
The salt is stuck to the pan. It'll be quite difficult to clean it. I'd just pretend that I didn't see it.

I put the whole fish and the pork rib on a dish and bring it to the dining table.
I first serve the fish soup.
Starting from mine, I pour it in four bowls in order.
I put the whole fish in Miria's platter.

"Dig in."
"Thank you, desu."
"Are you not gonna eat?"
"Yes, desu."

I insert my knife into the shiogama-roasted whole fish.
The knife cuts it like butter.
It seems to be soft.

I take a spoonful and put it in my mouth.
The soft meat of the bream explodes inside my mouth.
It's delicious.

The salt seems to be in moderation.

“It’s delicious. Try it, Roxanne.”

I pass the dish with the shiogama-roasted fish to Roxanne. I try the soup next.
The mellow and juicy, boiled whole fish melts inside my mouth.
It tastes equally good.

“It’s tasty.”
“The soup is good, too. Adding the whole fish to the soup was the right choice.”
“Right choice, desu.”

While it was Roxanne’s and Sherry’s turn to try the shiogama-roasted fish, Miria takes some soup.
They bite into the whole fish.
Later, when it was Miria’s turn again, she grabs it.
She grabs it with everything she has.

“So it’s holiday tomorrow, right? Would Sherry like to go to the library? Actually, won’t the library be closed?”

While waiting for Miria to calm down, I ask.
Tomorrow is the holiday, the day when one season ends and another begins.

“Is it going to be a day off for us?”
“Well, isn’t it a holiday?”
“On the calendar but…”

So it’s a holiday in name only?
When I was out, buying ingredients, I did hear that the bakery and the vegetables shop will remain open.
But the guilds will be closed.
Is the holiday perhaps not for slaves?

“Generally, it is.”
“However, shops conduct their business like they normally do. The library remains open every day of the year. And there’s no such thing as ‘closed’ in case of the labyrinth.”
“Is that so?”

Why can't there be a holiday at the labyrinth?
The art is a blast. (TN: Don't ask me why it's here)

"The orders of knights will be out of commission. The counters of guilds will be closed. Farmers will have a day off, too."
"I'll be going to the auction tomorrow. Because there's participation fee, I'll be going there by myself. Like I said earlier, it's in order to increase the battle strength of our party."

I offer an excuse to increase the number of party members.
Furthermore, it's not a good decision to take these three with me as they'll definitely object to the addition of a female party member.

"That's right."
"We will enter the labyrinth early in the morning. After that, it'll be day off."

I propose, at which Roxanne nods.

"Thank you very much."
"Thank you very much. Then, can I really go to the library?"
"Sherry will go to the library."

I have no idea as to how large is the collection of books in the library but I'm sure that Sherry couldn't possibly read them all in just two days.

"Then, I'll spend some time shopping and relax for rest of the day."
"As usual for Roxanne. What do you want to do, Miria? Is there any place you want to go to?"
"Sea, desu."

That was a quick answer.
Well, even if she said 'sea', it doesn't necessarily mean 'swim', right?
Yeah, I know that she intends to step into the water.

"Will you be fine?"
"Fine, desu."

Even though she said that she'll be fine, I can't help but feel uneasy about this.

“Except through fishing, if you catch a fish, it’ll be a big problem, I think.”

Sherry seems to be thinking the same thing as me.

“I thought so. Does fishing exist here?”
“Yes, it’s a recognized hobby of nobles and retirees. Because nobles and influential people catch fish through fishing, it has been recognized as an exception to the fishery rules.”
“Is fishing at the sea allowed, too?”
“My grandfather used to go to the sea for fishing, so I believe that it’s allowed. There should be a fishing tackle shop in the Imperial Capital.”

Just like she said, her grandfather was a wealthy man.
Are those who do fishing different from those who catch fish for food?
I don’t get it.

“Well then, Miria, will you try fishing? Fishing. F-i-s-h-i-n-g.”
“Yes, desu. Fishing, desu.”

Answers Miria.
Will Miria really be content with fishing?
If she’s happy, I’m happy.
However, whether she understands what fishing really means or not is questionable.

Chapter 120 - Tackle

Next morning. Having returned from the labyrinth, we go to the library in the Imperial Capital after eating breakfast.
My Item Box is filled with the items I picked up earlier in the morning.
I can't go sell them since it's the holiday today.

I send Sherry off after giving her 1 gold and 5 silver coins.
I see her off until she was inside but for some reason, Sherry turns back when she reaches the reception desk.

"What happened? Did you forget something?"
"No, I asked for the location of the fishing tackle shop. They said it is in the opposite direction of the adventurers' guild, toward the Imperial palace, the second street to the right."
"You went to the trouble of asking? Thank you."

I was planning on asking at the adventurers' guild. She really saved me the trouble.
I am grateful.
Perhaps no one will be there because it's the holiday.
After Sherry was inside, I head out with Roxanne and Miria.

We move behind the library, toward the white wall of the palace.
Lined up in front of us are magnificent mansions.
It's not enough to just say 'lined up'. All the buildings are separated by the equal space.
It really gives the feeling of a noble district.
Even the road is different from the main street. The style has completely changed into the stone-paved one.

I feel totally out of place.
If I continue onward, will I find the Emperor's residence?

"It looks to be there."

Roxanne points.
There's a store where many fishing tackles are on display.
It's the fishing tackle shop.

The rod is made with some kind of wood.
It has a dull feeling but by all means, it really looks like a fishing rod.
It can certainly be used for fishing.

“Welcome.”
“I want to do deep-sea fishing. Is it possible for you to prepare the necessary tools?”

I go inside and ask the shop clerk.
Not many fishing rods were on display inside the shop.
The mechanism needs to be changed depending on the targeted fish and the location. They can’t be mass-produced.
The clerk’s job is Merchant. It’ll be quicker to have him prepare it.

“Are you fishing for the first time?”
“Yes, and I think Miria have never done fishing either.”
“No, desu.”

Miria was looking at the fishing gears with great interest but she comes over when I ask her.
As expected, she hasn’t done fishing before.

“Yes, sir. Let me prepare it for you.”
“I will leave it to you.”

The clerk prepares a tackle.
Rod, reel, fishing thread, weight, hook.
There doesn’t seem to be any float.
Is it thread fishing, then?

“As for the fishing rod, I think this one is good for beginners. When you get used to it, you will also get to understand your preference and then it can be adjusted appropriately for different fishing locations.”
“Got it.”
“One reel and two fishing threads, including a spare. The weight and the thread can be changed depending on the location and the fish you want to catch. For this reason, we provide different types. By connecting these, you can achieve your desired settings.”

The clerk shows us an example of how to set it up.

The thread goes out from the fishing rod. A hook is then attached to the tip of the thread.
Nothing particularly different from usual.

“I see.”
“The bait will sink after it has been attached to the hook. Let’s see… as a bait, you can either use worms or shrimps. You can get them by the seaside. They are great to catch small fish. The shell can’t be used, however.”

In this world, the shell contains poison.

“I see, I see.”
“I see, desu.”
“Use heavy weight when the wind and the current are strong. However, if it sinks completely, it will get damaged in case it gets jammed somewhere. Therefore, you need to adjust the weight, so it doesn’t sink completely.”

The clerk explains to us how to do fishing.
I only listened to half of what he said. As for Miria, she was eager to learn everything with the assistance of Roxanne’s translation.

“I see, desu.”
“Regarding fishing, I heard there are certain rules and areas. Is that true?”
“Yes, that’s right. The place where you are fishing has to be approved by the Empire. Furthermore, there is a limit of one rod and one hook per person. Attaching more than one hook to the line is prohibited.”
“Got it.”

A single hook?
Because there are no floats, fishing with one hook will not cause damage to the fishing ground.

I look at the prepared fishing rod in the clerk’s hand.
It’s a three-piece fishing rod.
It’s made of wood. Quite soft.

Inside out.

A pointless use of high-tech.

The reel is dull, though.
There is no bail arm attached either, so the cast can't be used.
It really is just winding-the-thread.

"This fishing rod is the pride of our store. I'm sure you will be able to use it for a long time."
"What do you think about it?"

I pass the base piece of the fishing rod to Miria.
It's about one meter long.
Connecting the three, the fishing rod measures three meters.

"Also, you might want to have a basket while fishing, and it would be convenient if you have a colander when you catch a fish. Both the basket and the colander are available right here."

While Miria was checking the fishing rod, I go to check the basket and the colander out.
Both are skillfully made using wood.
Since there is no plastic in this world, the wood processing technique has advanced.

"It's okay, desu."

When I return with a basket and a colander, Miria passes the fishing rod back to me.
With this, everything seems to be done.

"Do we have everything here? Then, can I buy all of these?"
"Thank you very much. Let me see… as a customer who's fishing for the first time, the total amount to pay will be 3,500 Nars. I will also add a bag and a tackle box to put the fishing rod in."

The clerk gives us a bag and a tackle box for the fishing gear.
As for the price, I'm confused.
If I take it as daily food expense, it seems high. However, is it still high if I take it as an equipment?
30% discount was effective, at least.

"That's bad."

“Bad, desu.”

Miria gently pulls my arm and says in a low voice.
Did my feeling bad made her feel bad, too?

“It’s fine.”

I place my hand on her head and pat her gently.
I thought it would cost a gold coin when I heard it was a hobby of nobles, but it wasn’t the case.
It’s satisfactory.

Miria holds the fishing rod and the box while Roxanne holds the colander as we leave the store.
I hold the basket.

“Thank you, desu.”
“I hope you get us a good catch.”
“Good catch, desu.”

Miria’s eyes show determination.
The only thing I want from you is to not jump into the sea to catch fish if you fail with the rod.
Well, Roxanne seems to have given her similar warning already, so it should be fine.
Even if she doesn’t listen to what I’m saying, she will be sure to follow Roxanne’s orders.

We go back to the wall behind the library in order to warp.
The destination is Hafen in the Harz Duchy.
Whenever I think of a seaside, this is the only place that comes to my mind.
Palmasque seems to be surrounded by sea as well, but I’m not sure about it since I never went out of the guild.

It isn’t morning yet in Hafen.
Is it still the holiday here or has the holiday already passed?
The holiday is between spring and summer. In short, it is something like the summer solstice.
The day’s activities should start earlier in this part of the north than the rest.

I take a look around.
The elf Village Head Lv3 is here.
He's the the same Village Head from before.
I approach him to talk.

"Is it okay to do fishing around here?"
"Yes, it is permitted to do fishing anywhere around here. The seashore further down seems to be quite a good point. The people who did fishing there before managed to get quite a good catch. Because it's a rocky area there, it is difficult to setup a net, so there seems to be a lot of fish."
"Further down? Let's go, then."

I follow the village chief's instructions, and reach the shore.
There is no possibility to lay waste for this fishing ground. I can understand the reason why it is hard to setup a fishing net around here.
Usually, in the places where you can move around freely, there will be no fish, making this point not bad at all.

The shore has a large number of reefs.
It really is a good point.
Miria is looking around with a serious expression.
She runs to a rock, and looks into the sea.

"There's fish, desu."

Satisfied, she comes back.

"So, will Miria be fishing here?"
"Yes, desu."

I am still concerned about her but because it's the holiday today, I should probably let her do what she likes.
I call Roxanne over, and leave all the fishing gear.
I put a leather hat on Miria.

"Just in case, I'm giving you five silver coins. You can buy whatever you may need from that village."
"Thank you, desu."
"I will pick you up in the afternoon. Don't go too far from here."

“Yes, desu.”

I entrust Miria with the fishing gear, and leave.
I go to the forest close to the shore. From there, I cast Warp for the wall back home.

“Will she be fine?”
“It will be alright. There should be a few beastkin in the village who speak that language.”

Ah, that reminds me, she somehow managed a conversation before.
So, will there really be no problem?
Besides, Miria knows about the sea better.

“And Roxanne, I will be giving you ten silver coins.”
“Umm, just me? Is that really okay?”
“Since Roxanne is the number one slave, you are special.”
“Yes! Thank you very much, Master!”

I hand ten silver coins to Roxanne.
In Roxanne’s case, it is not necessarily a waste since she will be shopping.
She will surely buy clothes for Miria, too, this time.
It was the logical thing to do, and it also landed me a lot of points.

Roxanne accepts it with a smiling face.
Apparently, the auction participation fee is 1,000 Nars. It is about time I go to the auction hall.
Perhaps, the participation fee will not be confirmed until I go to the auction hall.

“Well then, I am off.”
“Yes, have a good day. Find a good party member. I will leave it to you, then.”

Roxanne has already accepted my expanding the harem.
I will have to take full advantage of her words.
I promise her.

I pass the house keys to Roxanne, and jump to the waiting room in the merchants’ guild.
The waiting room is crowded with people.

This is the first time I'm seeing these many people in the waiting room of the merchants' guild.
There is a possibility of hitting someone while coming out of the wall.

Nah, it was okay.
I didn't collide with anyone.
I thought my heart would beat faster while choosing a new harem member, but I am plenty calm.
Nothing will make me fail.

There is a different receptionist in the waiting room.
Once you pay the participation fee there, you can go inside, it seems.
I follow behind the line of people in front of me.

"Is the participation fee 1,000 Nars?"
"That's right."
"Hey you lots, did you know? It seems a wizard slave will be exhibited today."

When I was about to pay the participation fee to go inside, someone shouts.
A dirty old man who looks like the boss of a workers' camp.

"Is that true?"

The guy who went inside before me reacts.
Everyone seems to be interested in the wizard he mentioned.

I object.
What's important is not their job.
But whether they're beautiful or not.

"I will get them no matter what. Do you have white gold coins? If you don't, go back home and bring some."

The old man keeps on shouting. You can hear his voice everywhere.
I wonder if people will really go back with this.
As expected, no one went back. The old man leaves, looking satisfied.

I pay 1,000 Nars and go inside.

I advance to the inner part.
The small rooms, which are normally used for meeting, have been turned into showrooms for the slave merchants to exhibit the slaves they are selling.
I enter one such room.

“Welcome, our shop is exhibiting this man from the dragonkin tribe.”

The slave merchant speaks as soon as I step in.
There are three men inside the room.
One of them is most likely a customer since he is an explorer.

Second one is a sturdy, big, muscular man.
His job is Dragon Knight Lv1.
A job a chuunibyou would love.
I wonder if it’s a racial job of the dragonkin tribe.

“I see.”
“The dragonkin tribe excels in battling abilities. Their power and presence can easily be the main force of any party in close combat. You may consider them the best combat slaves available.”

I receive recommendation from the slave merchant.
Even though they’re called dragonkin, they don’t look that different from humans.
Their body is slightly larger.
I guess they really are suited for combat.

“I see.”
“This man is an outstanding one even amongst the dragonkin. I can recommend him with confidence. Also, he has already been training in the labyrinth, he has already acquired the Dragon Knight job, so he can immediately be put to use. It is also rare to have someone from dragonkin as slave. You will certainly regret it if you don’t bid on him when you have the opportunity.”

You are saying he has trained but he is just a Dragon Knight Lv1.
He seems to have only just acquired it.
I can’t trust the recommendation of this slave merchant.
And above all, he is a man, so that’s a ‘thanks but no thanks’.

I decline politely and leave the room.
I move to the next room.
There are two female slaves in this room.

Both of them are sitting on chairs.
It's different from the room with the dragonkin before as they are not being kept separately in a cage.
Well, if they must be put in a cage, it means they may run away immediately after you buy them.

One of the women is young and cute.
The other one is a beautiful, mature woman.
I'm not sure if they are good enough to be in this auction, though.

"These two are mother and daughter."

The slave merchant whispers in my ear, with a grin on his face.
I see.
It's something I really want to try once before dying.

If I didn't become an explorer, I would definitely become an AV actor.
When I retire, I would like to be a professor in a girls' college. That place is a mountain of treasures.

I withdraw because I don't have that much of an interest right now.
Or perhaps, it is not practical.
I wonder if I should've bought them and sold them off immediately.

There's a woman in the next room, too.
Apparently, there are more women around here.
Earlier, Alan the slave merchant told me that women are more expensive. How can they be so common?

The woman in the next room is graceful and noble. She is quite the beauty.
As long as she remained silent, she would look like a young lady.
I think she has been a slave for a short time.
Her grade is indeed high.

"Do you like her? Although she is not suited for combat, she is a first-class beauty."

Indeed. With just one glance, you can tell she is not suited for rough stuff.
I had to go out since more customers were coming in.
She is an enormous beauty, with her hair pulled back.
Since she can not fight, however, there is no helping it.

If she sat quietly, with her long hair stretched out, she would look just like a princess.
Anyways, there is no way she can become a princess now.
Rather than getting disillusioned after hearing her story, it's better to form delusions without talking to her.

Besides, this is not the best place to talk for this is a place where people are being sold.
I'll just keep her impression as that of a student who never sought sexual entertainment.

I pull myself together and move to the next room.
Only one woman in this room?
There is the slave merchant as well, but no customers.

She is really beautiful, too.
Slaves exhibited at the auction seem to be different.
She also looks big and muscular, so I don't think she will have any problem even with combat.

"Welcome."

When the slave merchant calls out, the woman stands up.
Huge.

Vesta | Female | 15 years old
Villager Lv2

I take a look at her.
She's a woman with fiery, red hair.

Chapter 121 - Auction

"H-Huge."

The woman who stood up was significantly taller than me.
Isn't she about two meters tall?
Maybe taller. She possibly exceeds even 2 meters.

And her chest is so huge.
Two huge watermelons are popping out of her clothes.
More than a meter… seriously…?

Calm down. Don't panic.
Maybe they look big because of her body size.
If the whole body is big, other body parts will probably be big, too.
That must be it.

Considering this, could her proportions be same as Sherry's?
After all, there is a significant difference in height.
Isn't she just twice the size of Sherry's?
I knew it. There's no doubt.

If her height is nearly twice as long, it is not strange for her breasts to be twice as big.
Yeah, they're merely double.
If her height is double, that makes her chest four times bigger.
And if you take the volume into account, then it is about eight times bigger. TN: Hx2 Wx2 Lx2

Eight times…

"Nice to meet you."

She bows eight times.
No, wait.
They move up and down eight times.
Vesta's face should be a little bigger than Sherry's. Shouldn't it need to be double, too?
Considering her height, it is rather small.

There are various parts that change in size as you grow.

Vesta's legs and arms are long and slim. She looks like a model.
Simple multiplication won't work, I guess.

Her skin color is light brown.
Her hair is red and short-cut.
Her eyes are red like her hair.
And those big irises make her eyes even more beautiful.

When Vesta raises her head, it can be seen that she is more than one head taller than me.
Her chest is at the same level as my eyes.
That's exactly where I want to look.
What is her cup size? [TL: i think he talks about the movement, moving this and that]

"Her name is Vesta, she is from the dragonkin tribe. As she just turned 15 and can therefore be sold, I brought her here."

The slave merchant approaches me.
You have to be 15 years old to be eligible for the auction?
Well, I am not particularly looking for a slave any younger than this.

"Since she is from the dragonkin tribe, she must be able to fight in the labyrinth, right?"
"Of course. Although She was not specially trained, her combat abilities are the best in my house."
"I'll be fine, I think."

Vesta says while standing.
She is Villager Lv2. Well, I can see that she hasn't fought much.
Just like the Dragon Knight Lv1 before, but she doesn't have a newly acquired job, at least.

"Have you been to any labyrinth before?"
"No, but I have killed a monster in the vicinity of one. It didn't hurt at all, so I don't think I will have any problem."

Well, Slow Rabbit Lv1 did have considerable offensive ability.

Whatever. If she says that she can fight, then it shouldn't be a

problem, I guess.

“However, there are a few weaknesses of the dragonkin. They are not good at night, so please avoid fighting late in the night. Also, there is a special instruction regarding their meal.”
“Is there something you can’t eat?”
“I don’t have any particular likes and dislikes in respect of food, so any food will be fine. However, dragonkin need to eat volley once every ten days.”

I sent my question to the top, and the answer came down from the top.
In the physical sense of the word.
It doesn’t mean ‘looking down’ from the top.

“Volley is an item dropped by Oystershell. You can either kill Oystershells or buy it from the guild. The dragonkin, especially the females, become physically weak if they don’t consume volley.”

The slave merchant adds.
He even made the demerits known. What an honest merchant he is.

“Isn’t that a problem?”
“She is a virgin sex slave. It is her first year as slave since she just turned 15, so you will definitely enjoy it. Don’t you think so?”

She has a beautiful face, and she doesn’t have a problem with fighting in the labyrinth.
She has a gentle personality, too.
Vesta here meets all the requirements I had in mind.

“She is not bad.”

Rather, I really want her.
I really want to buy her.
Her beauty and her big chest.

However, I am pretending to be troubled, so he doesn’t get his teeth into it.
But it shouldn’t really matter since I can just bid on her.
Or perhaps, it’s in order to have a higher starting bid?

“I am thankful for your time.”
“Thank you very much.”

Vesta expresses her gratitude.
Although it was pleasant, I am not happy since it was directed to other visitors.
Her attitude is similar to an attendant’s since all the visitors in the shop are potential customers.

“It all comes down to whether they can make a successful bid or not. Don’t try to sell yourself to every visitor and flatter them.”

I shot back since I don’t approve of her doing it.
The slave merchant grins.

“Umm, I think it’s alright.”

How can it be alright?

“As for the other visitors, I will just tell them that I can’t enter the labyrinth.”

Because another visitor enters, I take my leave.
Even If you say that, I will still be troubled.

Thereafter, I visited other rooms.
As expected, the majority of the slaves are females.
Because it’s the auction, it’s full of beautiful women.

Even so, Vesta and the young lady from the room before her are the ones that stand out the most.
Since I have made my choice, it is time to get started.
I step into the next room while thinking that.

The room is full of visitors.
Is there some great slave here?
I walk to the front.

“So you participated, after all.”

As I went to the front, someone whom I know greets me.
It’s Alan, the slave merchant from Vale.

“Oh, it’s you.”
“We are exhibiting a wizard this time. It is the best job to improve party strength. I can recommend him with absolute confidence.”
“A wizard?”

Which reminds me, that old man was shouting something like this back at the reception desk.
So a wizard is really going to be exhibited in the auction, huh?
Certainly, Wizard is the best job a party can have.
Sherry, too, said that a party requires a wizard.

Well, I am the only one covering it for our party.
With two, our offensive ability will be doubled.
I would really love that.

If only he weren’t a man.

The man standing next to Alan was surrounded by the visitors.
His job is Wizard.
So he is Alan’s slave, huh?
Well, it doesn’t say ‘man’, it’s showing ‘♂’.

Is he really a man?

“Right before the auction, he was sold suddenly by a certain house.”
“To suddenly sell a wizard, they seem to be in a crisis.”
“Lately, his earnings had started to decline. It wasn’t originally the case. Over time, it reached the point where it was impossible for him to repay his debt.”

A person from Baradam family, huh?
Alan once said that having sources is important for a slave merchant.
Roxanne and that woman from the Baradam family were acquaintances in the past.
It is no wonder that Alan managed to get Roxanne if he has connections in the Baradam family.

This wizard, however, does not have a family name.
He doesn’t seem to belong to the Baradam family.
How can a commoner child even become a wizard?

“Probably thanks to an Orb he somehow got his hands on.”

“As one would expect, it is rare for a wizard to be exhibited. What does Michio-sama think about the wizard there?”

Is it really rare for a wizard to appear on the auction?
I have heard that only the children of nobles and rich people can become wizards.
It really is a shame that he is a man.

I can make a successful bid on him, and offer him in exhange for a female wizard. The problem is, I don’t know of anyone who has a female wizard.
It’s probably impossible to have two wizards exhibited on the same auction.

“He will sell for quite high.”
“That’s right. It won’t be surprising even if he goes for more than 1 Million Nars.”

Alan sticks out his chest proudly.
It will be ridiculous if that happens.
I politely decline him, and try to leave.

“Have you guys prepared your white gold coins?”

When I turn around, the old man from before was still shouting.
I see.
Is he making a declaration to everyone that he is absolutely getting him,
In order to lessen the competition?

I am not sure if it will turn out like that, though.
Still, I don’t think someone who gets scared from just that can compete with him in the first place.
I want to say that I have two white gold coins, but I decide against it.

“The order has been decided via lottery. Please move to the second floor as the auction will be starting shortly.”

Someone makes the announcement.
So it’s finally starting, huh?
I head to the second floor.

A papyrus is posted on the hall's door.
Apparently, it has the order listed on it.
Since i can't read the letters, I don't know what's written on it.
I should seriously start learning it from Roxanne.

"Good, the wizard's turn is at the end, so you guys just go ahead and spend all your money."

The old man is still shouting.
It looks like Alan's exhibition will be the last.
It doesn't matter to me either way.

I go inside the hall.
I pick a suitable seat.
I can't say it's house-full, but about 80% of the seats have already been occpied.
Quite a number of people seem to have showed up.

"Gentlemen, thank you very much for you visit today. We will now begin the auction sponsored by the slave merchants' guild. The order of the exhibition has already been decided via a lottery conducted fairly. The first exhibitor, please come forward."

The auctioneer, who's standing to the left, starts the auction.
Two men come on to the stage.
He is that man from the dragonkin tribe.

"Nice to meet you."
"First exhibit, a 15 years old male from the dragonkin tribe. The minimum bid is 100,000 Nars. Then, please go ahead."

Once the slave merchant bows his head, the bidding starts.

"220,000"

Someone bids.
It went up to 220,000 all of a sudden?
Shouldn't the first bid be same as the minimum bid, and it's then raised by 10%.
Is the auction not attended only by the brokers who are used to it?

"230,000"

“250,000”
“260,000”

However, the bidding proceeds without any complaint.

“270,000”
“280,000”
“300,000”
“310,000”

The auction continues as if nothing happened.

“320,000”
“330,000”

Eventually, there were only two people who were still bidding.
The first bidder is a man, and the other one is a man, too.

“350,000”
“360,000”
“370,000”
“380,000”

Both of them are increasing it by 10,000 at a time.
Then suddenly, a long line forms in front of one of the two men in the back.
I wonder what is that for?

At closer inspection, it looks like many people are lining up and putting money in front of that man.
Silver coins are piling up in front of that man.
And a good number.

“I will not lose to an asshole who breaches etiquette!”

The man, whom the coins were put in front of, raises his voice.
Is this donation drive in order to punish a breach of etiquette?
Although no one donated a gold coin, if a hundred people donated a silver coin each, it would easily amount to 10,000 Nars.
It is possibly a threat to the other man.

If I commit a breach of etiquette, will I receive the same treatment.

I put a silver coin, too, and go back to my seat.

“390,000”
“Guu… then, 395,000.”
“The minimum increment to the bid is 10,000 Nars. Anything less than that will not be allowed.”

The man who started the bidding gets his bid rejected by the auctioneer.
The breach of etiquette was allowed, but when it was a breach of rule, it was rejected.
If he didn’t know about the rule regarding the denomination of increment in the bid, is this the first time this man is participating in an auction?

“I understand.”
“390,000. The current bid is 390,000. Anyone else want to bid…? Since no one else wants to bid… then, the successful bid is 390,000 Nars. Please both the successful bidder and the exhibitor move to the room backstage.”

The winner gathers the silver coins and leaves for the back room.
The donation drive was serious. Really serious.

“400,000 for a dragon knight is not bad, but I would like to save my money for the wizard.”

I hear someone mutter.
It wasn’t particularly higher that the market price, it seems.
He is still just a Lv1, though.

Also, they don’t want to spend their money early on since the wizard’s turn is still to come.
It makes sense, of course.

One can not but hesitate about bidding if the second choice is exhibited before the first choice.
Is this how the order is decided via lottery?
I would be grateful if Vesta appears early for me.

Did my prayers get answered? Vesta is the third person to appear on stage.

Vesta and her slave merchant both come on to the stage.

She appeared before the wizard or the young lady.
If someone wants a combat slave, they can get the wizard. If they want a beautiful woman, the young lady awaits.
This is a cleverly designed order.

“Next exhibit, a 15-year-old girl from the dragonkin tribe. The minimum bid is 200,000 Nars. Then, please start.”
“200,000”

I bid as soon as he says ‘start’.
This momentum is crucial.

“210,000”
“310,000”

The bid increased by 10,000 Nars.
So I decided to increase the amount to 10 times.
Therefore, I bid 100,000 Nars.

“320,000”
“420,000”
“430.000”
“My bid is 530,000”

I increase it by another 100,000 Nars.
It is necessary to show them my determination in bidding, regardless of the amount.
Since I have white gold coins, this amount will not make me falter.

“you…”
“540,000”
“640,000”

One person seems to have already quit.
But I still increase it by another 100,000 Nars.

“640,000. The current bid is 640,000 Nars.”
“…”

The man who bid 540,000 glares at me.

I keep up my poker face.

“Anyone else wants to bid…? If not… then, the successful bid is 640,000 Nars. Please, both the successful bidder and the exhibitor move to the room backstage.”

The man who bid 540,000 quit, after all.
What a weak man.
Looks like the strategy to increase the bid by 100,000 Nars worked.
I have successfully won Vesta.

Chapter 122 - Vesta

After my bid on Vesta was declared winning, we move to the backroom.
As I thought, it is the same room where the guild temple is.

“Thank you.”
“Thank you, Master.”

Vesta bows in gratitude following the slave merchant.
I don’t know if she’s really grateful or just being courteous.
Nah, she really is grateful, I think.

“We will wait here inside the room. You can go back if you want to participate in the bidding.”
“Ah, let’s go together.”
“Certainly.”

After your bid has been declared winning, you can go back to the auction hall to participate in the bidding.
Let’s forget about the wizard, I wonder how much I can buy that young lady for.

However, I’m afraid of what Roxanne would have to say if I were to bring two women at the same time.
Honestly though, looks aside, that young lady is not fit for combat.

Give a man an inch, and he will take a mile.
I have managed to acquire Vesta.
I should be satisfied with just that.

“I will be in your care from now on.”
“Likewise. Please take care of me.”
“I will be relying on you.”

I send my message to the top.
Vesta really is a beauty.
Big, red eyes.
Tight, lifted nose.

Long, slim legs.

Being looked down at from the top is not that bad.
And I would love to greet the beautiful cups in front of my eyes.

I head to the meeting room.
However, there is a strange feeling of intimidation when I am near Vesta.
It is the feeling of pressure.
Don't walk behind me, please.

I go inside the meeting room.
Vesta stands next to me.

"There is a 1,000 Nars compensation when you successfully purchase a slave from the guild organized auction, so I will deduct 1,000 Nars from the bid amount of 640,000 Nars. This time, the auction was a great success for me, so the total amount to pay shall be 447,300 Nars."

Oops
30% discount unexpectedly worked.
I thought it would be inapplicable in the auction.
Oh well, it isn't this slave merchant who's paying.
It's I who's paying.
It's my win to have gotten the 30% discount skill to work.

"My bad."

I finish the payment before the slave merchant changes his mind.
There's not even any need to use the white gold coin.
After the necessary changes to the Intelligence Cards and a long explanation, Vesta is finally mine.

"Thank you very much. Please take care of me if I need something in the future."

After bidding our byes to the slave merchant, both Vesta and I walk out of the room.
The slave merchant stays in the meeting room.

"Does the merchant have something else to do?"

“He said he’s meeting with someone.”

Vesta mutters.
It seems he still have some errand to run.
The auction is an opportunity for slave merchants to meet, after all.
It’s not strange for acquaintances to exchange information after the auction ends.

“First, try to wear these.”

I take out hard leather shoes from my Item Box.
Unsurprisingly, Vesta is barefoot.
Even if they are combat slaves, slave merchant won’t provide them with appropriate equipment.

“Okay, thank you very much. Are we entering the labyrinth right now?”
“We are not.”
“Then, what are they for?”
“To keep them on.”

Even though Vesta is big, it should be fine because of the magic incorporated in the equipment.
After all, it fits Sherry perfectly.

“Okay, thank you.”

Vesta bows and wears the shoes.
Her ass easily reaches my chest.
What?
Is she bragging about her long, slim legs?

I so want to shove it in her ass, but I control myself.
Such a kid I am.
It’s not like Vesta is really bragging about her long, slim legs.

It’s alright.
I’m an adult.
There is a way for an adult to handle another adult.
There will be a lot of ‘spanking’ later.

“Let’s go, then?”

“I heard that there is a famous labyrinth in Quratar. Even if it’s the current me, I will probably be alright.”
“We will be entering soon anyway. For now, just follow me.”
“Okay.”

I add Vesta to my party, and head back to the waiting room.
I can go back to the auction hall, but I pass on that.
I don’t want to take Vesta there along with me.
Also, the bidding for the young lady has most likely finished already.

Since the auction is still ongoing, there are less people on the first floor.
That said, there are still a few people in the waiting room.
All of them seem to be adventurers.

Since there’s an entrance fee, only party leaders need to participate, huh?
Come to think of it, I always thought of adventurers as masters, but there could also be adventurers who are slaves, too.
It is more probable for an adventurer to be a slave to a wizard than a wizard to be a slave to an adventurer.

I thought of abandoning the idea since there are people around, but if I turned back now, it would seem weird.
I recite the incantation (of [Field Walk]), and use [Warp].
Thus, through the wall of the waiting room, I return home.

Vesta follows after me.
It looks like she has managed to get inside [Warp] without having to lower her head.

“Oh, you came here in one piece.”
“Err…”

Vesta has a doubtful expression about her face.
Earlier, after the contract was finalized, I showed Vesta my Intelligence Card.
So Vesta knows that I am an explorer.

Come to think about it, I never gave it a thought when I used [Warp] to go to the merchants’ guild.

What would I do if Alan were there inside the waiting room.
Even if I somehow managed to deceive Alan, I would have lost my winning bid on Vesta had the slave merchant, who brought her along, been there.

Actually, before I even made the bid, wouldn't I have remembered if I had passed by him before somewhere?
It's troublesome for me to walk after having gotten used to [Warp].
I don't suffer much from the lack of exercise since I walk a lot inside the labyrinth.

"This is our home."
At the same time, comes a creaking sound as the door opens.

"I am back."

It is Roxanne's voice.
Had no one been at home, I would have liked to fondle Vesta's two melons.
However, I would be in trouble if she came back while I was in the middle of doing it.

"Welcome home."
"Oh, great. Because I had a feeling that master was home, I hurried back."

Roxanne comes trotting and greets me.
What are you, a dog?
A dog…?

"Let me introduce her to you. She is Vesta. From today, she is one of us."

When Roxanne puts her luggage down, I introduce Vesta to her.
She seems to have just come back from shopping.

"You are so tall. You seem to be reliable."

Roxanne admires Vesta.

"Yes, I would like to be of help in battles. Please take care of me."
"Likewise. It would be my pleasure working with you."

“Vesta, She is Roxanne, the number one slave.”
“Number one slave? that’s amazing.”

Is it really that amazing?
I seriously don’t get it.

“Even if you don’t listen to what I say, be sure to listen to Roxanne.”
“Umm, okay.”
“He is a nice master, he never raised his hand on us. Even so, you mustn’t grow arrogant.”
“Yes, I’ll be good.”

If the Sergeant is extremely strict, the commanding officer should wear a smile.
An effective troop management tactic.
If Roxanne is strict with Vesta, then there is no need for me to be strict with her.

It looks like I have made Roxanne assume the role of the ‘villain’.
It’s similar to Roxanne-Miria relation.
I am in Roxanne’s debt even more now.

“I hope you get along well.”
“Yes, Master.”
“Certainly, Master.”

If they don’t become friends, it will be troublesome.
I want it to be peaceful. For my health’s sake, too.

“You are so big and beautiful, as expected of someone my Master chose.”
“Roxanne-san is amazingly beautiful as well.”
“Thank you very much.”

Will it be fine since they are complimenting each other?
It seems she has broken through the first hurdle.

“Excuse me, Master is a explorer, right?”

Like I thought, it’s better for me to rest. Vesta asks Roxanne.
Why didn’t she ask me directly?

“Apparently.”
“But he used what seemed to be [Field Walk].”
“Ah… umm, please just think of Master’s job as Master.”

That’s an absurd pretence.

“Is that so?”
“You can’t be surprised by something of this extent. Don’t reveal these matters to others, please keep them a secret.”

I can leave the rest to Roxanne, I guess.
Vesta’s eyes are looking at both of us.
I nod when she looks at me.

“Y-Yes.”
“Then, how about the three of us buy what you need?”
“That’s a good idea.”

Roxanne agrees with my suggestion.
Frankly speaking, I would like to immediately go to the bed.
But it will be better to do it after the bath.
If I do it now, it may be problematic since Sherry and Miria are not around.

“Understood.”
“Vesta, what type of weapon do you use?”
“Since I am not that skilled yet, there isn’t any weapon I prefer to use. But people of my dragonkin tribe usually wield any weapon with just brute force.”

Brute force, huh?
Actually, when I heard the word ‘brute force’ coming from the top, she did give that feeling.
She is certainly strong.

“Any weapon?”
“It depends on the level of the floor and other equipment, but people of dragonkin tribe often use a sword and a shield. A powerful dragonkin can equip a two-handed sword in one hand, and a shield in the other one. By equipping the shield, one can increase their defensive capability. Even though I am not that strong yet, I can do

that to some extent, too.”
“I see. A sword, then?”

It looks like Vesta’s offensive power isn’t that high.
Well, you don’t need to have high offensive power to be a vanguard in our party.
Taking experience points and magic crystal into account, it is more advantageous for me to kill the monsters.

“Or perhaps, I can wield a one-handed sword in one hand and a large shield in the other?”
“I have never seen a large shield before. What about Roxanne?”
“I have seen a big shield with a dragonkin before. Perhaps, that was a large shield?”
“The large shield is only used by people of dragonkin tribe, so it is not widely known.”

I’ve never seen it in Quratar’s armor shop.
Maybe he didn’t put it on display?
I wonder if Sherry can make it.
I won’t know unless I ask her.

“Would I be able to get it if I went to the village where dragonkin live?”
“I am sorry. I don’t know where dragonkin live, so I don’t know where to get it.”
“Is that so?”
“Because both of my parents were slaves.”

Upon Vesta’s words, I can see tears in Roxanne’s eyes.
Because both of their parents were slaves, is that why?
But it doesn’t look like Roxanne is surprised.
Maybe because Roxanne is a slave, too?

“……Oh, is that so?”
“I don’t know where a dragonkin can get a large shield from.”

Vesta doesn’t seem to be worried about it, too, and continues to talk.
I wonder if it is not rare for both the parents to be slaves.
It seems to be the case.

Which reminds me, the slave merchant said he bought her when she turned 15.
Was she sold because she turned 15?
I wonder if she became a slave because both her parents were slaves.
Whatever, it is her first year as a slave.
It's regrettable but I understand.

"Well, it can't be helped, then."
"If I can acquire my racial job, Dragon Knight, I can wield a two-handed sword in one hand, and a large shield in the other hand. There are also dragon knights who wield a two-handed sword in each hand."
"Dual wielding?"
"Yes, it is called dual wielding, apparently."

As expected of a job a chuuni would dig.
It doesn't look like they can ride a dragon or shoot with a gun, though.
"Regarding armor, since you have brute force, is chainmail fine?"
"Yes, I think it will be fine. Also, females of the dragonkin tribe can also equip platemail. We don't seem to get tired while wearing a platemail. But not many females outside the dragonkin tribe can wear it."
"Well, I think it would be better to ask Sherry about the equipment that would be good for you."
"Okay."

Vesta looks a little puzzled, but nods.
It's obvious that she didn't understand what I meant by 'Sherry'.

"Sherry is a knowledgeable dwarf. She knows a lot about equipment, and also about party formations and battle strategies. Nothing can go wrong if you leave it to Sherry."

While I was lost in thought, Roxanne explains it.
Nicely followed up.

"Is that so?"
"Then, sit down on a chair, and show me your ankle."
"My ankle?"

Even though she was confused, Vesta sits obediently on a chair.
I take her shoes off, rest her leg on the chair, and pull the hem of her trousers above her ankle.

Even when she's seated, Vesta looks big.
Also, she seemed embarrassed as I touched her.
I will do plenty of that later, of course.
I take out a Sacrificial Misanga from my Item Box.
Since it was a piece of equipment with a skill attached, I had it inside my Item Box instead of the storeroom.
I feel like an idiot for occupying one slot inside my Item Box with it.
It is free now.

"It is a piece of equipment made by Sherry."

I bind the Sacrificial Misanga on Vesta's ankle.
Compared to her body, Vesta's leg is not particularly large.
Her ankle is slim and tight.

There is something similar to scales on her foot, but they are not hard.
Apparently, the scales exist on her feet. Above the ankles, however, they look just like normal, human legs.
It really is a smooth leg.

I am not particularly uncomfortable with its color.
Healthy, light brown is sexy.
I don't feel like going to the shop. I wanna go straight to the bed.

Chapter 123 - Because it's Master

"Did she make it herself?"

While I was binding the Sacrificial Misanga, Vesta asks from the top.

"Sherry is a master smith."
"She's a master smith… sama?"

Vesta says in a strange manner.
A sama that's not exactly sama.

"That's right, but stop with this sama"
"Eh? Umm, is that fine, Roxanne-sama?"

Vesta looks toward Roxanne and asks.
She is again being overly courteous.

"Please call me Roxanne. Both Sherry and I are Master's slaves like you."
Un
That's the normal reaction.
Had Roxanne proposed calling Roxanne-sama and Sherry-sama, a punishment would have been in order.

"Are you slaves, really?"
"Yes."
"How can a master smith be a slave? For us, the dragonkin tribe, the auction is really a great place to be sold at, and because of that, we are taught to properly serve. But for a master smith to be a slave…"

Which reminds me, I was told before that it is hard to get a master smith.
It is really amazing to have a master smith as a slave.
And probably, they will fetch more than Vesta if put on the auction.

And what does Roxanne being the number one slave in such an amazing place mean?
That will make her sama, surely.

Won't it?

Is being the number one perhaps a source of pride in this world?
Or a source of pride amongst slaves?
Which means, it is the same for our house.

It is necessary to have a set of good equipment, but ordinary slaves don't get to have one.
When you use slaves, you can blaze through the labyrinth. Consequently, the income from the labyrinth increases.
Considering this, Roxanne will surely be called sama.

"Well, just don't act so formal."

I stand back up once I finish binding the Sacrificial Misanga.
I lightly pat Vesta's shoulder.
When I thought about patting her head, I felt embarrassed.
Because she's taller than me.

"Okay. So this misanga was made by Sherry, right? and you are collecting them?"
"It is not like I am collecting them."
"Then, is there some reason behind keeping it?"

Vesta asks persistently.

"No particular reason. It is just a precaution."
"Is that… so?"
"This is a Sacrificial Misanga."

Roxanne explains to Vesta.
I see.
So she was wondering what use equipping an ordinary misanga is.
She didn't expect Sherry to make a Sacrificial Misanga, I guess.

"Oh well, it's alright. It's to protect you."
"Eeh? Is this really a Sacrificial Misanga?"

Vesta is shocked.

"It really is a Sacrificial Misanga."
"I heard it's a very valuable accessory. I remember my former

master trying desperately to get one."
"Very valuable, you say?"
"Yes, I never saw one until I came to Master's place. Ordinary slaves can not afford to have such a piece of equipment."

Roxanne confirms Vesta's words when I look at her.
For me, it's merely attaching a skill to a piece of equipment.

"I see."
"Is it alright for me to wear such a precious thing?"
"It's fine."
"Is it, really?"

I don't know how much a Sacrificial Misanga costs, but I'm sure Vesta's cost is higher.
If a cheap Sacrificial Misanga can prevent me from losing the more expensive Vesta, It's better for her to equip it.
It's rational.
If it's a norm in this world to not allow a slave to wear a Sacrificial Misanga, then what I am doing is an out-of-the-box idea, I guess.

It is quite rational.
I am certain that Sherry will approve of it.
This slave's price, however, is higher than that slave's price. I hope it won't lead to conflict.

"It's fine because it's Master."

Roxanne seem to support my idea, too.
There is no problem, then.

"Then, does Roxanne-san have one, too?"
"Yes, I have it already."

Roxanne pulls the hem of her trouser up.
She shows her Sacrificial Misanga to Vesta.
The misanga is tied on her gorgeous foot. It's making her ankle shine.
Should I head to the bed with them both right now?

"Ok, wait here a minute."
"Okay. Umm, thank you very much."

Vesta bows down.
I'm not going to the bedroom but the storeroom.
I take out an Iron sword.

"For the time being, keep this sword."

When I return to the living room, I pass the sword to Vesta.
I usually hang a steel sword on my waist, but I don't really use it in the labyrinth.
If Vesta is going to use a two-handed sword, then it's obvious that she is going to use the steel sword.
But, if I give Vesta the steel sword, I will be carrying the Iron sword.
Which means, Vesta's equipment will be better.
That will probably not be a good idea.

"Okay. Umm…"

Vesta anxiously looks toward Roxanne.
I don't see any problem. This Iron sword is of lower tier compared to my steel sword.

"It's fine. Because it's Master."

It seems to be alright.

"Let's go, then?"

We are going out shopping.
Facing a wall in the living room, I cast Warp.
This is the second time, so I hope Vesta won't have any problem.
I jump to the adventurers' guild.

"Yes."

Roxanne and Vesta follow after me.
It looks like Vesta is still surprised, but she is keeping quiet, at least.
Good girl.

"Where are we going now?"
"If we are not going to the weapons shop or the armor shop, then we should go to the grocery store first. I think it will be best to save the clothing store for last."

After stepping out of the adventurers' guild, Roxanne says.
So the clothing store is for last, huh? She seems to be suggesting that it will take long.
Oh well, that's fine, I guess.

"If it's about my clothes, I already have clothes."
"You will need a change of clothes, too."

I reject Vesta's suggestion.

"It's fine, because it's Master."

Roxanne's way of persuading her sounds funny.

We go to the grocery store first.
We look around for various items.
It's okay to leave this matter to Roxanne.

"This backpack, is it small?"
"I think so."
"Is that so?"

Regarding the backpack, it is the same, normal-sized backpack we are using but it looked like it would snap any moment.
It doesn't fit the big Vesta.

"How about a large one?"
"That would be better."
"Yes, I think it will be better."

We pick a large backpack.
Since it is large, it should be able to hold more items. However, the burden of carrying it will be greater.
Forgive me for doing this, please.
That said, it's a perfect fit, and it looks good on Vesta's shoulders.
Sherry, on the other hand, looks like she's climbing a mountain, carrying a large bag on her back.

"I apologize for this."

We purchase the backpack, a cup, a shiyukure branch, and various other items from the grocery store.

We put everything we bought just now inside the backpack.
The backpack is being carried by Vesta.

“Excuse me, I would like to buy this.”

When I was paying the amount, Roxanne hands something to the shop clerk.

“Did we forget to buy something?”
“No, this is for me.”
“I see.”

Roxanne pays for it herself.
It seemed to be one silver coin.

“This brush is a present from me.”
“Wah, thank you very much.”
“I am glad I still had some money left. Today, I also bought something for Miria and Sherry, too.”

So it was a hair brush?
Roxanne shows it to Vesta for an instant, then puts it in Vesta’s backpack.
We head to the clothing store next.

“Do you have clothes of her size?”
“Yes, we do.”

After I asked the shop clerk, we were led to the inner part of the shop.
They seem to have clothes for her.

“These?”
“They will become fairly large when worn.”
“They will?”
“We don’t have many customers from the dragonkin tribe, so we don’t have much variety.”

I don’t know how far this inner part extends, but there seems to be a fair number of clothes.
Is it similar to how dwarven adults wear childrenswear?
The male slave from the dragonkin tribe was huge, too, so I guess

all the dragonkin are tall.

“With these many, it’s not bad, at all.”

Roxanne steps forward.
Roxanne’s eyes seemed to flash when we heard there were not that many.
Do you really plan on going through all of them?
If clothes were allowed to be tried in this world, it would be a great hit.

“Three each of these two, please.”

Because I felt sorry for the shop clerk, I show him that I’m actually a buying customer.
He will not complain if I buy.

“I understand. Vesta, look here.”
“Is it alright for me to get so many?”
“It’s alright.”

I urge Vesta to move by pushing her shoulders.
Roxanne’s struggles with the clothes had already started.
Roxanne carefully examines every piece herself, then checks how it looks on Vesta.

“Maybe something like this?”
“Yes, it looks great.”
“How about this one?”
“Yeah, It is lovely.”

Both of them are choosing excitedly.
I am patiently watching.
The shop clerk is watching helplessly, too.
I occasionally share my opinion from a distance.

“This one, and this. Then, how about this one?”
“Yes. It’s alright, I think.”
“Then, can I have this one as well, please?”

This time, they choose it without asking me for my opinion, thankfully.
Once they finish choosing, I pay the amount.

I bought them at a generous, 30% discount.

We put the clothes in Vesta's backpack.
Large size is quite convenient.

"Thank you very much."

Vesta bows again when we leave the store.

"Glad you like it."
"Yes. But this dress is brand new, don't you think so?"
"Seems like it."
"I-I can't have you buy new clothes for me."
"It's fine. Because it's Master."

While walking, I overhear the conversation between the two.
It looks like used clothes are sold, too.
The people who wear new clothes seem to be less than I thought.
After having gone to the grocery store and the clothing store, next is buying ingredients for dinner.

"Vesta, can you cook?"
"I can cook something simple for myself, I think."
"Something simple?"

I wonder how much she eats.
I shouldn't expect too much since she doesn't look that confident in her skills.
Maybe eggs or probably rice?

"As for me, I can cook for everyone."
"For everyone? I am not confident in my skills to cook for everyone."
"Let see… how about you first try to make one dish?"
"Umm, I don't think I can make something to Master's liking. I can only make soup with potatoes and leftover vegetables, or stew mixed with bread crust."

Comes a disappointing reply, even though I was expecting a motivated answer.
Since both her parents are slaves, she doesn't have any confidence, is that the reason?
Stew mixed with bread crust?

Actually, it sounds somewhat delicious.

If I think about it, may be everything so far has been going extraordinarily well?
Roxanne can cook. Sherry had a rich grandfather. Miria's life centres around fish.
It would be too much for a daughter of two slaves, who was herself sold into slavery, to be expected to cook as well.

"Then, can someone help me and Vesta when we cook later."
"Yes, I'll be able to, I think."
"Then, can you please make soup today, Roxanne?"
"Certainly."

I have no idea how many fish Miria managed to catch. I'm also not sure if she hasn't eaten them all already. For this reason, I am making additional preparation.
I'm sure, Miria will cook the fish she catches herself.
So, leaving the fish for Miria, should I cook some meat?
Grilled rabbit meat would do.

I have some rabbit meat inside my Item Box.
As to how much I should cook, it will decide it later, depending on Miria's catch.
I also need to buy other ingredients, such as vegetables.

"I guess you eat a lot, Vesta, no?"

I ask her while picking up bread in the bakery.
I guess it would be better to buy more bread.

"Since I was called a cockroach all the time, I think I'll be fine."
"I-Is that so?"

I wonder who that person is who said that.
Slaves' kids really have it tough, it seems.
I don't know when I may step on a landmine, but I get it.

Well, since she maintains that she'll be fine, even though she was called a cockroach, she will probably be fine.
Actually, a cockroach's vitality is incredibly high, so it can also be taken as a compliment.

Even I was called a cockroach in the past…
It reminds me of hateful memories.

“This much should be enough.”

I purchase the bread per Roxanne’s advice.
I bought more than usual for there’s one more person now.
Would this much really be enough?
“It looks so soft and delicious. Can I really have the leftovers?”
Vesta asks Roxanne when we step out of the bakery.

“Everyone here eats together. Please eat without hesitation.”
“Wah, is it really okay?”
“It’s fine, because it’s Master.”

Is Roxanne really trying to persuade her like this?
I don’t even have the energy to follow up anymore.

“Since we enter the labyrinth, we need to take care of our health.”

To escape from this, I go inside the adventurers’ guild, cast Warp, and return home.

Chapter 124 - Breath

“I will be preparing the bath, then. Please take care of Vesta.”

After arriving at home, I escape to the bathroom.
I entrust Roxanne with Vesta.
However, the two of them come running after me.

“Master, if I may, please.”
“What’s wrong?”
“Vesta said she doesn’t know what a bath is.”

Did you come to see the bath?
Well, if you’ve no problem with it, I don’t have any problem either.

“You don’t know what a bath is?”
“I am sorry. I have never seen one before.”
“This is the bath.”
“We submerge ourselves in a tub filled with hot water. It seems to be a luxury only nobles can afford to enjoy.”

Roxanne explains it to Vesta.
Since it is something reserved for nobles, there is no helping if she doesn’t know about it.
You would of course want to see it if you never saw it before.

“Is that so?”
“My only concern is that if Vesta joins in, it may be a bit small.”

Vesta freezes.
Don’t tell me she doesn’t plan on going in.

“Well, I intend to have you join in. Don’t tell me you don’t like a bath?”
“A bath is something only nobles can enjoy, isn’t that right?”
“It’s alright.”
“It’s fine, because it’s Master.”

Does she still have something to say?

“Is it really alright?”
“There’s no problem. It will be a little small, however, since everyone is going to join in.”
“Okay. I think it will be alright.”

I am glad.
Looks like Vesta will be joining in with everyone.
‘With everyone’ is the most important part.

When I say ‘with everyone’, it is different from when I say ‘with me’.
That’s wonderful.
I can hardly wait.
It is frustrating, though, that I can’t go in right now.

“Then, I will start preparing it, so you can have a look.”

Instead, I decide to show her how I prepare the bath.
I cast [Water Wall].
The water starts filling the buckets I arranged on the floor of the bathroom.
It is a wall of water made by magic.

When I cast [Water Wall], Vesta let’s out a surprised sound.

“What do you think?”

Cool, no?
I must really look cool right now.
Vesta must really be full of respect toward me right now.
I must really look like a chuuni king.

“Amazing.”

Vesta is surprised.

“That’s right, that’s right.”
“Because it’s Master.”
“It’s my first time seeing someone from a tribe that can produce water.”

Eh?
Her line of thought is wayward.

“What do you mean by ‘tribe’?”
“Is it something different?”
“This is magic.”
“But Master’s job is not Wizard but you’re an explorer… ah, is that perhaps the job you call Master?”

She has already been inspired by Roxanne.
I wonder if it’s alright to leave it at that.

“Yes, it is. Because it’s Master.”

Instead of a confirmation from me, she is looking for confirmation from Roxanne.

“Is that so? Amazing.”
“Is there a tribe that can produce water?”

Is there really a tribe that can produce water?
Merman, maybe?
It is terrifying that there’s such a possibility in this world.
Well, there already are monsters that attack using water.

“I don’t know if there is a tribe that can produce water, but those from the dragonkin tribe can make fire.”
“Eh? Really?”
“Yes.”

As you would expect from a tribe that has such a cool chuuni name.
Because they are from the dragonkin tribe, is that why they can breathe fire?
That’s great.

They are on a completely different level of chuunibyou compared to someone like me who merely uses magic.
Just like a chuunibyou that manifests on the first day after summer vacation.
Matured over the vacation after experiencing the heat of the summer and all that resolution bullshit.

Compared to that, my chuunibyou is at a level of someone who experienced the opening ceremony for the first time.
I am barely a chuuni.

The most I can do is look down upon other freshmen.
I understand, yet I don't.

"Is it okay to show it to me?"
"It's okay. It is not that big a deal."
"Can you heat the water in the jars using your fire, please?"

I point to the jars filled with water.
If it goes well, it will become easier to prepare the bath in the future.

"I don't think it is possible to heat them."
"Is that so?"
"I can try, though."

It doesn't look like it will become easier.
Vesta steps inside the bathroom, and stands in front of the jars.
She bends down, and brings her face closer to the jars.
She blows fire from her mouth.

"Ooh"

Wow.
The flame sticks to the water surface.

"I can make about this much. It is a skill which is normally used to attract enemy's attention. Continuous use is not possible."
"I see. Still, It's amazing."
"Thank you very much."

The flame goes out in a few seconds.
It didn't persist for long.
It felt like a fire dancer dancing with a torch.
It can be used for a street performance.

"Huh? Can't everyone from the dragonkin tribe become a wizard since they can produce fire?"

If you can use magic, you can become a wizard.
Ordinary people, who can't use magic, can't become a wizard. However, since dragonkin can breathe fire, shouldn't they be able to become a wizard?

But when I checked Vesta's status, she didn't have the Wizard job.
Maybe she didn't use fire breath before?
Nope. Maybe she needs to be a Villager Lv5 first?
Or maybe, even if you can use magic, since it is not enough to deal a death blow, it is not considered adequate. This can be a possibility.

"It looks like it is different from a wizard's magic. Even a dragonkin can't become a wizard unless they use medicine at a young age. Master is more amazing since he can use magic."
"It's different?"

I wonder how it is different.
Can breathing fire not become an amazing magic attack?
I will consult Sherry later.
I cast [Fireball] to heat up the water.

"Wow. Really amazing."

Vesta stayed for a while, but eventually went back to the kitchen with Roxanne.
I head to the kitchen after I was halfway done with the preparation of the bath.
Roxanne is boiling soup.

"Ah, are you going to the labyrinth?"
"…No, just taking a break."
"Is that so?"

She didn't come to me to light the fire, how is it already lit?
Ah, if I think about it, can't Vesta light fire?

As Roxanne said, I wanted to go to the labyrinth. However, because fire has been lit, someone needs to stay here and keep watch over it.
Since I need Roxanne to guide me, I can't leave her here, and I would be uneasy if I left Vesta alone.
I don't think she will run away, but in case anything happens.
Even if Vesta does not intend to escape, there might be a temptation if she were left alone on the first day.

I would hate it if she escaped without me doing her first.

If she wants to escape, she can wait till tomorrow, at least.
Miria is currently alone. However, since she can eat fish, there is no chance for her to escape.

“Vesta, can you wash these and cut them to a size that is easy to eat?”
I change my plan, and hand Vesta the vegetables.
Tonight’s dinner will be tempura. If Miria manages to catch fish, that is.

“Certainly.”
“Cut these mushrooms in half. We will fry them for dinner. You can look forward to it.”
“It’ll be wonderful.”

If I say it like this, she will not run away before dinner.
I go back to the bathroom, and prepare the bath some more.
Stealthily from the bathroom, I head to Quratar’s 7th floor, and recover my MP.

It took longer with just one person, but there was no problem.
Luckily, I got rabbit meat. Therefore, even if Miria fails to catch anything, there will be no problem.
After having finished preparing the bath, I head to the kitchen.

“Once the soup is done, can you please put the fire out and we’ll go and pick Sherry up.”

After having finished preparations for tonight’s dinner, the three of us go to the library.
We jump to the lobby in the library, and walk halfway inside.
Sherry immediately finds us, and comes out.

“Drop dead.”

Sherry’s lip movement suggests so, but it must be my imagination.
I don’t know exactly what she said because her lip movement suggested it to be Brahim.
It’s an illusion.
By chance, is it possible to translate the lip movement?

“S-Sherry, she is Vesta. From today, she is a friend.”

“Drop dead… ah, are you perhaps from the dragonkin tribe?”
“Yes, I am. Please take care of me.”
“Is that so? Alright, please treat me well, too.”

What was that?
Sherry suddenly became gentler.
It would be a good thing, though, if both of them were to have a good relationship.

“Vesta. This faint smell of liquor is coming from Sherry.”
“Okay.”
“Here is the deposit money.”

Sherry passes the gold coin to me.
She looks at me with eyes sharp as a bird’s.
There’s something wrong, after all.

“I ask of you to take care of her.”
“Of course, especially from a certain bad guy who is only interested in the large chest of a female dragonkin.”
“Is that so?”
“Yes. Anyone who ogles them should just drop dead. It is not the female dragonkin’s fault. Dragonkin don’t breastfeed their children. Female dragonkin’s breasts are filled with air, they are just airbags.”

Airbags?
My hope, my dreams shattered just like that.

“Really?”
“The breasts of the females from the dragonkin tribe receive unfair treatment.”
“I see.”
“Because dragonkin females have a large chest, it’s normal for them to be made fun of, that they’re filled with air. It’s alright, though.”

Vesta takes over and explains.
Only dragonkin females are made fun of because they have a large chest? So it would be okay if Sherry had a big chest?
She seems to have a chest size complex.

“No, there’s no problem with Vesta, at all. It is the guys, that only

care about a large chest, who should drop dead."

Sherry tries to cheer her up.
It's a rare sight.
A child comforting an adult.
If you look at Vesta and Sherry standing side by side, they look like a pair of aliens.

"Well then, let's go to Hafen and pick up Miria?"
"Yes."

I didn't jump inside Hafen, but to the forest which is close to the seashore.
Miria is still at the reef.
There seem to be other people, too.
She seems to have attracted attention.

"How is it, Miria? Did you manage to catch anything?"
"Yes, desu."

Miria responds joyfully.
It looks like she got a great catch.
Because she got a great catch, is that why she attracted attention?
Her clothes don't seem to be wet.
It doesn't look like she entered the sea.

"Let's go, then?"
"Yes, desu. But…"
"She is saying she would like to share some of the fish with the others. It looks like she received their assistance in fishing."

Miria says something. Roxanne translates what she said.
She wants to share the fish she caught with the others?
Miria seems to have grown up.

"It is Miria's catch, after all. I don't mind."

"Okay, desu."
"I am planning on making tempura, the dish we made the other day. I thought you should know, so you can share the fish that won't be of our use."
"Will do, desu."

Miria lifts her rod, and heads toward the basket.
She is planning on eating them, after all.

Moderate number of fish were inside the basket.
There are several kinds of fishes inside, ranging from big to small.
She doesn't know the concept of 'catch and release'.

"It looks like Miria can see the movement of the fish. They are saying that she is an amazing fisherman."
"Understand the feeling of the fish to catch it, desu."

Miria is distributing the fish. She is receiving appreciation from the people surrounding her.
She is being treated like a fishing grandmaster.
Well, her attachment to the fish is extreme, after all.
When they had received the fish, the people surrounding her left.

"Miria, this is Vesta. From now on, she is a friend."
"Please take care of me."

After everyone disappears, I introduce Vesta to her.
Vesta bows her head.

"Miria, desu."
"Vesta, she is Miria."
"Onee-chan, desu."

Miria sticks her chest out proudly.
Or perhaps, she stuck her chest out to buff her upper body, so that Vesta would look up to her?
I did tell her to treat Roxanne as her older sister.
I wonder if it makes Vesta the younger sister since she only just joined.

"Yes."
"Call me Onee-chan, desu."
"Onee-chan."
"Vesta, desu."

Miria stretches her hand out and pats Vesta's head.
It's not like her hand didn't reach, but it looked kinda funny.
Miria tiptoeing and trying her best to stretch out looked

heartwarming.

Sherry probably would not reach, though, even if she tried.
Earlier, when I tried to pat her head gently to comfort her, I couldn't.

"For the time being, the five of us are the party members. In the future, however, the number will increase further."

I declare my intention to expand harem, so that Vesta knows, too.
Beginning is always critical.
The other three hear it as well.

"Okay."
"Good. Let's go home and make dinner, then?"

Seeing Vesta nod her head, I decide to head back home.
We first wait for Miria to tidy up her fishing tools and then head to the forest where I cast [Warp].
Vesta is carrying the basket while Sherry is holding the colander.
I have Miria put the fishing gear in the storeroom.
"Have put it in, desu."

"Then, can I ask of you to cook the fish, Miria?"
"Yes, desu."

The quantity of the fish she is cooking is more than five people's fill.
Is she perhaps cooking more because she'll be eating a lot?
I don't think there's a need to make grilled rabbit meat now.

"I will warm the soup, then. Can you please help, Vesta?"
"Yes."

Vesta breathes fire and lights the wood.
Seeing it is great as ever.

"Apparently, it is not magic. Do you know about it?"
"Dragonkin can store a gas which can be burnt in a portion of their body. The gas itself is inflammable. Since you can light it even if you are not from the dragonkin tribe, it is not considered magic."

I ask Sherry. She explains it to me.
Like methane gas?

Because you can light up the gas, it's indeed not magic.
It's a chemical reaction.
No wonder she is not a wizard.
I wonder how they light it up, though.

"Huh? Is that so?"

Somehow, even the person in question has a surprised expression about their face.

"As expected of Sherry. You know it all."
"Thank you very much."
"Sherry, can you warm the oil on the table, please?"
"Certainly."

I ask of Sherry to do some work.
Apparently, she is not drunk, so she should be alright.
I pass a lemon to Vesta.

"Vesta, squeeze it."
"Okay."
"We will use it with the food, so."

I prepare the coating.
Thereafter, I cut the rabbit meat into bite-sized pieces.
After cutting it, I pre-cook it with salt and pepper.
Because there is plenty of fish, it'll be better to have some meat alongside tempura.

Chapter 125 - Pafupafu

We put all the dishes on the dining table and take our seats.
Vesta sits right next to me.
I pour the soup in order.
The last one to receive some was Vesta.

“S-Sorry. Is this really okay?”
“It’s alright. Then, let’s start eating. Miria, do you have any recommendation regarding the fish?”
“Haddatts, desu.”
“Then, I will try it first.”

Miria points at a fish fillet, coated. She puts it in the saucepan.
Delicious ‘Juwa~’ sound resounds.
It looks good. I hope it tastes equally good.

“I think this fish is called Barudea.”

Sherry informs me. It is a fish that doesn’t exist on Earth, I think.
I don’t really care whether or not there is a translation or a Brahim equivalent for it.

“Roxanne, which one do you want?”
“I would like the same one as Master, please.”
“Sherry?”
“Barudea as well, please.”

It seems to be quite popular.
I put their shares in the saucepan.
Do I even need to ask Miria?

“Haddatts, desu.”

For it to have two names is really confusing.

“The name is Barudea. Barudea.”
“Barudea, desu.”
“Is it Barudea?”

“Do you know about it?”

Vesta mutters, so I confirm with her.
Vesta is looking curiously at the tempura saucepan.

“Yes, I heard it is a very delicious fish.”
“Then, why don’t you try it, too, Vesta?”
“Is it alright?”
“It is alright.”

After putting Roxanne’s, Sherry’s and Miria’s fillets in the saucepan, I take out mine.
Because there is no wire mesh, I drain the oil the best I can and take a bite.
My manner may be unsightly for I’m using the chopsticks (to drain the oil).
Hot.

“To sit at the same table as Master, to eat the same food; is this really alright?”
“It’s fine, because it’s Master.”
“Master, thank you.”
“You should rather thank Miria, who caught them. They really are tasty.”

Crunchy coating.
Delicious, springy meat inside.
This fish really tastes great.

“Onee-chan, thank you very much.”
“Onee-chan, desu.”

Miria repeats proudly.
She coats Vesta’s share of fish and puts it in the saucepan.
Thereafter, I take out the fillets of the three using the chopsticks and drain the oil before putting it in their platters.

“Delicious.”
“It is even more delicious than Barudea I ate back in the days.”
“Delicious, desu.”

Quite popular, it seems.

Lastly, I put Vesta's fillet in her platter.

"I have never eaten such a delicious thing. Thank you very much, Master. Thank you very much, Onee-chan."
"Onee-chan, desu."

I wonder if she knows what 'Onee-chan' really means.

"Then, should we try mushroom next?"

I put the fried mushroom in Vesta's wooden bowl.
It may be different from the shiitake mushroom last time; but this mushroom is delicious, too, nonetheless.

"I would like the mushroom, too."
"Then, I would like the rabbit meat, please."
"Barudea, desu."

You guys trying to act important, eh?

"What do you want to try next?"

I ask Vesta while putting the fried mushroom in her wooden bowl.

"Eh? Is it okay for me to choose?"
"If you have never eaten it before, I recommend you to try clams."
"Clam? What is that?"
"A really delicious food."

Roxanne recommends it as well.
Since Clamshells appear frequently on Haruba's 18th Floor, my Item Box is full of clams.

"At my former master's place, they used to make clam broth on special days. It surely was delicious, but I didn't know that it is possible to eat the clam itself. If it is alright, can I have clam, then?"

I wonder why she was not given the boiled clams.
Is it perhaps possible for the soup to be delicious without it?
But never have I heard before about discarding the clams after making the soup.

"Onee-chan, too, didn't eat good food before coming to Master's

place, desu.”
“Is that so?”
“Delicious, desu.”
“I look forward to it.”

Half of Miria’s remark didn’t get through.
It is not bad, though.

While picking up a mushroom and putting it in my mouth, I coat a clam and put it in the saucepan.
Thereafter, I put a mushroom in Roxanne’s platter, and a piece of rabbit meat in Sherry’s.
Now that I think about it, this is the first time I made rabbit meat tempura.
I should take responsibility and try it, too.
Hence, I put a piece of rabbit meat in my wooden bowl.

“I will be trying this next. How is it, Sherry? Is it good?”
“Yes, it’s delicious.”
“Really?”
“Then, I would like to have a piece of rabbit meat, too, please.”

I knew it would be like this, so I had already coated two.
Miria places fish above everything else, so she unsurprisingly ignores the rabbit meat.
I put a clam in Vesta’s platter.

“This is… this is really delicious. I didn’t know it would be this good.”
“Glad you like it.”
“Yes, Roxanne-san.”

Vesta seems to be delighted with the clam.

“What would you like next, Sherry?”
“I would like to try this vegetable.”
“This fish, desu.”

I can’t predict what these two would choose, at all.
Because Miria caught various types of fish.

“Vesta, what would you like next?”
“Umm, can I really choose? Hmm… what should I get, then? Let me

see… Then, I would like the same food as Master.”

Vesta orders fried rabbit meat.
Including Roxanne’s order makes it two.

“Got it.”
“It really is great to be able to choose what to eat. All of these are so delicious. I seem to have been purchased by a great person, certainly.”

I had no idea she will be deeply affected like this.

“Don’t cry…”
“Yes. I am sorry.”
“Here, you can have some bread.”
“The soft bread from before… to be able to eat it, too…”

It made her cry even more.
It was not the right thing to do.
Vesta is gradually becoming Roxanne version 2.
She is eating the same food as me.
Even though she can choose whatever she likes.

However, the freedom of choice ends now.

“Alright then, how about we enter the bath?”

Now that we are done with eating, and the dishes have been cleaned up, it is time for the main (forced) event.
There is no way out.

“Okay.”

Roxanne, Sherry and Miria start undressing as they are used to it by now.
Oh
Roxanne’s big mountains pop out the moment she removes her shirt.
Sherry is cute as always. And it is hard to leave Miria’s body out.
When there are cat ears and tail, the level of joy jumps up 10 times.
I can’t pick one.
I am glad from the bottom of my heart that I am their master.
They are wonderful.

Vesta takes off her shirt, revealing her large body.
Huge melons. More like basket balls.
Really huge.
Even bigger than Roxanne's.

Large. Intense. Strong.

O-Outrageous.
Not allowed.
It will not be tolerated.
They must be wrecked.

Then, let's wreck them.
With these hands.
With this tongue.
What's left is to add some salt.

We enter the bathroom. First, I wash Roxanne's body.
I cover her whole body with foam, then wash it thoroughly.
I firmly wash her sacred mountains.
They always feel great, no matter how many time I do them.

"Roxanne-san, what is that?"
"It is soap. When Master will wash your body, you will feel good."
"I will be washed?"

It will be I who'll feel good, though.
Of Course, I have every intention of carefully washing Vesta's body.
She doesn't have a choice.
With Vesta standing in the middle with her large body, the bathroom felt over-populated. Even so, I am happy.

"Next is Sherry."

It's time to wash Sherry's lovely body.
Today is the day I am supposed to wash Roxanne's hair, but I will postpone it for now.
I remember that soap is not good for hair, so it is better to wash their hair once every three days.
It would become greasy if it were to be left alone for long. So, If it's this much, it'll be fine.

I wash every nook and cranny of Sherry's small body.
Rubbing her petite body, I feel like I am doing something forbidden.
Whatever, it feels great.

Because her body is small, her breasts feel good, even though they're small.
I don't need to be humble.

Miria is next.
I wash her slowly and carefully in order to fully enjoy it.
The cute Miria obediently settles in my arms.

"Wash, desu."
"Alright. Lastly, it's Vesta's turn."
"Okay."

Vesta comes in front of me.
Huge.
Basket Balls right in front of my eyes.
First, I cover her with foam.
I though they'll will be saggy considering how big they are, but they are quite firm.
They are more elastic than I imagined. To the point that they pushed my finger back.
So very supple.

They're full of meat and fat, of course, but not hard at all.
I bend down in the middle of washing her, and sink my face until it was halfway in.
Not too hard, not too soft.
I won't get bored in here.

I wash the rest of her body since I got scared of the eyes on me as I was only washing her breasts.
I cover the whole of Vesta's large body with foam, and wash it thoroughly.
The color of her skin is light brown, so it doesn't seem to have tanned.

I place one of my hands on her chest, and stretch her arm to wash it.

Sometimes, I grab it with both my hands.
Wow, amazing.

What is it filled with?
Is it filled with dreams and hopes?
If I remember correctly, it's filled with air.
If I am not mistaken, she said something about air sac.

But which air sac?
Function?
Farm?
Or air sac? (TN: This is a play on kanji. All three have different kanji but they're pronounced as 'kinou')

"Vesta, try to inhale air."
"Okay."
"Exhale."
"…"
"Inhale once again."
"…"

I don't fully understand it, but examining it closely, I kind of get it.
When inhaling, her right breast becomes larger; when exhaling, her left breast becomes smaller.
They're definitely air sacs.
There are air sacs inside.

"Huh? Even if there are air sacs inside, why is the large chest of a dragonkin female called useless?"
"Because there's only useless air inside."

Is that really the reason?

"Is that really so?"
"The dragonkin females with large chest are not at fault."

I try to confirm with Sherry if that is the only reason.
Because they don't seem to be able to produce milk, they are unable to breastfeed, unlike human females.
However, she does have nipples (or so they look like) on her breasts.

Are they only for show?

“Because of the air sacs inside, the larger their breasts, the greater their athletic ability.”
“Really?”
“The great athletic ability of the dragonkin is due to the air sacs inside their chest.”
“It is just the air that goes in.”

Hearing Sherry say things like that, I don’t think she really fully knows the functionality of the air sacs.

“We, human beings, inhale air directly into our lungs. It goes out from the lungs when we exhale. In fact, it is somewhat inefficient. They, however, have two air sacs. When they inhale, the air enters the right air sac. When they exhale, the air goes out from the left one. The air flows in one way, from right air sac to the left air sac, so they can actually breathe air more efficiently.”

I remember what I learned in biology class about birds and use it to explain.
However, it wasn’t left and right in case of birds, but front and back.
The birds have higher air capacity thanks to the air sacs.
And thanks to that, they can fly high in the sky.

“To know such a thing, as expected of Master.”
“Regarding the efficiency being low, I really don’t get it.”
“Amazing, desu.”
“Is that so?”

Even though Vesta, who belongs to the dragonkin tribe, is nodding; Sherry is not convinced.
Sherry is a formidable adversary, after all.

“In case of human beings; since air is breathed in and out from the lungs, it is easy for the stale air to remain inside the lungs alongside the fresh air.”
“I don’t think it has anything to do with stale or fresh air.”

Sherry looks puzzled.
Haemoglobin, oxygen, carbon dioxide; she doesn’t know about any

of those, of course.
How should I persuade her?

“Then, think of it like this. Put some water in a tub, and try to empty with a cup. After that, siphon the water with a tube. The siphon will be more efficient as water will be able to flow per unit of time.”
“That may well be true. Mumumu”

If she doesn’t know about the basic function of the fresh air, it’s not possible for her to understand it.
Sherry’s face looks troubled. I will try to deceive her forcibly.

“Due to the breathing efficiency thanks to the air sacs, dragonkin are highly athletic. The larger the air sac, the more the air goes in. With this, the concept that dragonkin females with larger chest have greater athletic ability can be explained.”
“Is that so? Even though I am from the dragonkin tribe, I never heard about this before.”

I need to make Vesta understand that having large chest is not a bad thing.
Not a bad thing, at all.
Actually, It can’t be more wonderful than this.

“As expected of Master.”
“You can feel the air going out of the sac if you touch it.”

I urge Roxanne to try.

“Well. Are you okay with this, Vesta?”
“Yes, go ahead.”

Roxanne stretches her hand, and touches Vesta’s chest.
The atmosphere has, somehow, turned lewd.
Lovely.
Roxanne’s soft hands gently touch Vesta’s breasts.

This is bad.
She bends forward on her.

“S-So, before I wash your hair, can you wash my body?”
“Certainly. It does feel like air is coming in when she inhales.”

It was okay for Roxanne to do what she wanted to Vesta's body, it seems.

"Yes. Is it okay for me to wash Master's body?"
"Yes, it is. All of us will be washing Master's body."
"Understood."

Vesta turns around and kneels down in front of me.
Roxanne rubs my shoulders, while Vesta approaches me with her kneeled body.
No way.
Pafupafu… please…
I'm an idiot.
It's impossible.
There's no way for Vesta to know such a thing.

"T-This."
"I heard from a senior of mine that I can make my master happy with this technique."

A young girl who knows such an adult technique.
What have you taught her, Vesta's senior.
What a great technique you have taught her, Vesta's senior.
Superb.
Excellent.
There is nothing that can possibly ruin this moment.
Absolutely nothing.

To be able to live this glorious moment, I, Michio Kaga, 17 years old, have received a tremendous favor. I sincerely thank you.
Pafupafu will live on forever.

Chapter 126 - Cold Body

Engulfed in a sweet euphoria, I wake up filled with ecstasy.
Roxanne's soft skin feels so pleasant.
Smooth, elastic, I can feel such a weight on my arm.
I almost subconsciously bent over to please myself.

N-Not good.
Which reminds me, I left Sex Maniac on.
Well, with Roxanne sleeping in my arms, I would assault her even if didn't have Sex Maniac on.

Roxanne notices that I have woken up, and gives me a kiss.
It makes me think that she is seducing me to do her again.
Even though she's doing it per my instructions.
I can feel her soft lips on mine, and her moist breath on my face.

C-Calm down.
Calm down.
It's okay.
It won't be long before the night falls again.

I used Sex Maniac last night.
Like I thought, with four people around, it is a little difficult without using Sex Maniac.
However, when I use Sex Maniac, even the four of them are not enough.
It is a vexing problem.

But then, it's important to show them that there's still room for more.
In the future.
It's important to show them that we need more party members.
So, even if I'm left unsatisfied now, it'll pay off later.

Roxanne's tongue can make up for the unsatisfied feeling.
I push my tongue in Roxanne's mouth, and stick it to her tongue.
I move my tongue around and taste her mouth.
I didn't let go of her mouth until I was fully satisfied.

“Good morning, Master.”
“Good Morning.”

I release Roxanne. Next is Sherry.
There’s more to come.
I fully enjoy the lovely mouth of petite Sherry, until our lips separate.

Thereafter, I receive a kiss from Miria, who had changed places with Roxanne.
It’s still dark inside the room, but Miria can move freely regardless.
I enjoy Miria’s wildly moving tongue to my heart’s content.
After fully enjoying her mouth, I let my lips part from hers.

“Good Morning, desu.”
“Good Morning.”

I waited for some time after Miria’s turn was over, but Vesta’s kiss did not come.
Huh? Where is she?
The size of the bed, since two are adjoined, is big enough.
There is enough room for Vesta to join in.

When Vesta entered the bathtub, it became cramped as I had expected.
It felt like we were potatoes in a bag.
To be sandwiched between Roxanne and Vesta in the bathtub.
It was godly.

I move my arm around the bed, searching for Vesta.
Is she still sleeping?
She is…
Here.

“She is cold.”

I pull my hand back the moment I touch her body.
Vesta’s body, who was sleeping naked, was cold.
It was very cold.

Eh?
Is she alive?
Don’t tell me…

Is she dead?

“As expected. Because she is a dragonkin, her body is cold in the morning.”
“Really?”
“Yes.”

Sherry explains.

“…Good morning, Master.”
“Good Morning.”
“I am sorry. I feel a little weak in the morning.”

Vesta seems to have woken up.
She is alive, thankfully.

“Your body is cold. Are you alright?”
“Yes. When the temperature during the day is high, I lose warmth, and my body becomes cold during the night. My body regains its warmth after I wake up, so it’s fine. Conversely, if it’s cold during day, my body becomes hot, so I don’t freeze while sleeping. However, I wake up tired and exhausted in the morning. We, dragonkin, are weak from late night till early morning.”

Dragonkin, for one reason or another, always seem to be troubled.
Now I get that they don’t have such a cool chuuni name without any cost.
Vesta raises her body, and touches me.
Chilly Vesta is pleasant, too.

“Are you fine with moving? Don’t push yourself too hard.”
“Yes. But I may be slightly cold.”
“I don’t mind. Rather, I am actually happy.”

The temperature is high because it’s summer.
Vesta’s cold skin feels good.
I can rub her skin to warm her up.

Doesn’t that make Vesta, who becomes cold at night, the best body pillow you can dream of?
If it became any hotter in the summer than it already is, it would be uncomfortable to sleep together like this, I’m afraid.

With Vesta, however, there is nothing to fear.

What's more, she can conversely be used to keep the body warm when the temperature drops.
Ice pillow in the summer. Hot water pack in the winter.
I may not be able to part from her anymore.

Vesta puts her lips on mine.
She sucks my mouth, and pushes her tongue in.
Her cold, refreshing tongue moves around.
Her tongue reaches every hot corner inside my mouth, and intertwines with my tongue.

She is the most aggressive one amongst the four of them.
It looks like Vesta's senior taught her how to do that.
I really want to thank this senior of hers.

While locking lips with her, I try put my hands around Vesta's back.
She is too big, to the point that I can't pull her into my embrace.
Even so, she is great.

I somehow manage to hug Vesta's cold body.
Because her body is too big, she didn't wear nightgown.
I am sandwiched between her enormous breasts.
Vesta moves away after finishing with her tongue and breasts assault.

"I wonder if it felt good. I was told that you would love it if I did it like this."
"It was amazing."
"Master's warm body was great, too. It might not have felt as good since I am still not used to doing it, but I will try my best from now on."

You are going to try more than that?
I look forward to it in the future.
After Vesta left, Miria came and helped her put a shirt on.
With the help of Miria, she put on her equipment.

"Are you done changing, Vesta?"
"Yes, I am done."

“It’s time to go, then. Vesta is coming with us, too.”
“Yes.”

From the bedroom, I warp to Haruba’s 18th floor.
This time, in addition to the other three, who are used to it already, is Vesta.

“It is still early in the morning. Vesta, are you fine with moving around?”
“I am okay now, I believe.”

Inside the small room, I hand her a hat, a shield and also a magic crystal.
I hand Vesta the wooden shield and a spare black magic crystal I had.
I am sorry for Vesta’s equipment being only spares for the time being.

“Also, use this steel sword for now.”
“M-Master will not have a sword, then? Are you sure?”
“I will be using a different one.”
“O-Okay.”

I take the steel sword off my waist and pass it to Vesta.
Vesta is using both her hands. She’s holding the two-handed steel sword with her right hand and the wooden shield with her left.
It indeed seems that the big Vesta can one-handedly swing the two-handed sword easily, without any problem.

“Oh right, Sherry, can you make a large shield?”
“The dragonkin tribe uses large shield. The present me cannot make it. Also, higher-tier material is required for plate, either steel or Damascus steel.”

Like I thought, the current Sherry can’t make it.
If it uses steel, then it will be either equal to or greater than the steel shield that Roxanne is currently using.
Is there a way to obtain it?

“There are fewer monsters on the right than on the left. Where would you like to go?”

“The left will be fine. It should be safe enough for Vesta.”

Under Roxanne’s guidance, we advance through the labyrinth.
Roxanne is the vanguard, followed by Miria and Vesta.
Sherry is the rearguard, behind me.

“Umm, can Roxanne-san track the monsters by their smell?”
“Yes, I have to be of use to Master.”
“Amazing.”

While Roxanne and Vesta were having a conversation, we reach a group of monsters.
Three Fly Traps, one Kettle Mermaid and one Clamshell.
In order to take out Fly Traps first, I need to use fire magic.
I cast [Fire Storm].

“Sherry, Miria, come to the front. Vesta fall back a bit, please.”

Roxanne commands the three of them into the battle formation.
Roxanne takes the central position, Sherry goes to her left, Miria covers the right side.
While sparks were dancing in front of us, Vesta takes a step back, and comes next to me.

“They may shoot water magic, so don’t lose focus.”
“Okay.”

It is especially dangerous standing behind Roxanne.
Vesta and I line up separated by two columns.
I wait for the flames to go out, then cast the second [Fire Storm].
I follow it with the third one.

“Here it comes.”

Right after Roxanne’s warning, a water shot comes flying between Vesta and me.
I am glad I was not directly behind her.
The monsters in the front close in and attack her.
Two Fly Traps and one Kettle Mermaid.

Roxanne dodges the Fly trap’s attack easily.
While dodging, she hits it with her Estoc.

The Fly Trap, that spat water earlier, comes to the front.

The Clamshell seems to be falling back.
It's probably planning to spit water from behind.
Sure enough, while it was being attacked, it spits water.
Roxanne dodges by a hair's breadth.

While dodging the second Fly Trap's attack, is it even possible to dodge an attack coming from behind it at the same time?
She's terrifying as always.
I cast one more fire spell, and burn the Fly Traps to nothing.

Miria and Roxanne take on the remaining Clamshell and Kettle mermaid.
Sherry takes a step back, and uses her spear's [Incantation Interruption] skill to interrupt their skill attacks.
Without taking a rest, I cast [Sand Storm] to tidy the remaining two up.
Without getting exposed to the enemy attacks too much, we finish the monsters off.

"Amazing. Everyone is Amazing."

Vesta is in awe.
"Well, it's not always like this."
"Monsters can be taken out quickly using magic attacks. However, the monsters we fought were weak. It takes more time to defeat stronger ones."
"I guess."

Which reminds me, Vesta told me that she fought monsters in the vicinity of the labyrinth. She never entered one before.

"Roxanne-san was especially amazing. Absolutely wonderful. She will be my role model."

Vesta goes to Roxanne while picking up dropped items.
Using her as a role model won't help you.

"Thank you very much."
"I wonder how you can move like that."
"You will be good if you watch the monster's movement closely. Then

you move your waist like this to dodge.”

Roxanne shows her the movement.

“So you use your waist?”
“Right, desu. ‘Ba’, desu. Monsters sometimes move like ‘shu’, ‘shu’, ‘ba’, ‘ba’.”
“I-I will try my best.”

Vesta nods with doubtful expression.
Looks like Vesta has common sense.
Well, try your utmost to dance.

We will continue Vesta’s field trip until she becomes Villager Lv5.
If she becomes Lv5 during the morning, it will be great.
It took some time for me to become Villager Lv5.
The conditions, however, are not the same. The experience gained from 18th floor monsters is better.

Villager Lv5, Farmer Lv1, Explorer Lv1, Herbalist Lv1.

Oh well, it turns out that Vesta doesn’t have many jobs.
Both Explorer and Herbalist were obtained today.
Warrior and Swordsman did not appear. It shows she hasn’t trained that much.
It is admirable that she doesn’t have Thief.

“So this is basically how we fight inside the labyrinth.”
“Yes, all of you are amazing.”
“I am planning on having Vesta fight soon.”
“Y-Yes, I think I will be fine.”

She looks a little tense, but there is enthusiasm.
I move to Haruba’s 1st floor using [Dungeon Walk].
But the situation here is exactly what I feared.
The monsters here collapsed with the first spell.

“We went there the other day. Is it fine to start from the 10th floor?”
“The 10th floor will be a little tough, though. I don’t think the monsters there will be done in with one blow.”

I confirm with Sherry.

When I obtained the Assassin job the other day, one spell was enough to almost beat the monsters on 10th floor.
Then, should I avoid the 10th floor, after all?

If I am not mistaken, we went to the 8th floor when Miria joined. But Miria had the Diver job's assistance against aquatic monsters.
That said, Vesta has leveled up to Villager Lv5, and there is the 'Increase in Endurance' effect of Miria's Diver Lv33 job this time.
And she has the advantage of 5 party members against 4 in case of Miria.

But I feel uneasy going to 10th floor directly.
We should try one floor at a time. We can start from 2nd floor and advance to 9th floor in Haruba's labyrinth.
It is a little troublesome to jump to Quratar.

"I will think about the 10th floor if it doesn't work."

I switch my weapons from the Rod of Offerings to the iron sword.
Cheep Sheep appears, and falls in two spells.
Is the [2x Increase in Intelligence] effect that big?
I should allocate bonus points toward Intelligence so much so that I can nearly kill the monsters in one spell.

"Next one is here."
"Alright. Then, Vesta, can you try to finish off the monster with your sword if it is not killed in one spell?"

I instruct Vesta, and cast a spell.
The monster collapses in one spell. Wonderful.
The next one survives the attack.

Vesta raises her steel sword and runs.
As expected, her big body is really strong.
She doesn't seem to fear the monsters. She has great war potential.
A two-meter-long soldier, who cuts monsters with their sword, is scary.

Vesta swings the sword down from above.
The Cheep Sheep charges at Vesta, but Vesta easily takes on the blow using her shield.

The monster’s charge was quite strong, but she received it easily with one hand and neutralized it.

Next, It cuts in from the side. She catches the second charge with the shield.
Once she stops the monster in place, she stabs it with her sword.
Cheep Sheep drops down.

“I-I did it.”

I open the Party Job Settings interface.
Villager Lv5, Farmer Lv1, Explorer Lv1, Herbalist Lv1, Warrior Lv1, Swordsman Lv1.
The conditions for Warrior and Swordsman were fulfilled at the same time.

Chapter 127 - Dragon Knight

“Excellent. What an interesting fighting style.”
“Thank you very much.”

The way Vesta fought was that of an expert fighter.
Perhaps, It was her huge body that drove her like that.
What made it terrifying was how she used the two-handed sword to kill it with just one hand.

Well, according to her, she has fought a monster outside the labyrinth before.
A lot of things in a world where monsters exist is supposed to be different, I guess.
She is different from the weak Japanese.

“On the next surviving monster, use this spear to kill it.”
“Spear?”
“I am going to have you try using a variety of weapons.”
“Okay.”

I pass the spear to Vesta.
Or more like, I forced it on her.

Both Roxanne and I automatically obtained Knight when we got to Warrior Lv30.
To get the Knight job, I think it may be necessary to defeat monsters using spear.
Apparently, the warriors aspiring to be knights train with spears.

Vesta, along with the steel sword, hands over the wooden shield.
It seems she will be using both her hands for the spear.
As expected, is it hard to wield it with just one hand?

The Cheep Sheep that survived my spell, Vesta challenges it.
Big Vesta spins the Sacred Spear.
Amazing.
She is actually spinning it above her head.

She is like a hero from the three kingdoms era.
If someone like Guan Yu were to appear, I would cry out loud, indeed.

Vesta rushes at the monster, and swings the Sacred Spear down.
Cheep Sheep gets smashed down.
Another single blow!?
It is most likely a coincidence.

However, there was no new job, even though she finished it off with spear.
No Knight, as expected, but not even Dragon Knight?

“Great. Next time, try fighting bare-handed.”
“Bare-handed?”
“It will be a little difficult, though.”
“I think I will be fine.”

After receiving the dropped item and the Sacred Spear, I see Vesta off to the next battle.
Vesta fights a Cheep sheep bare-handed.
Vesta strikes. Cheap sheep returns the favor with a body slam.
Hoping for no damage was too much, I guess.

[Plating] and [Heal], I cast both on her again.
I don’t know how much recovery she requires, but for now, I cast it only once.
Vesta dodges the next body slam, and slams her fist into the sheep’s flank.
The monster charges at her again, but Vesta manages to dodge it again.

Looking at Vesta and the Cheep Sheep, they look like a girl playing with her dog.
Vesta hits the sheep on its head.
Oops, that can no longer be called playing.
It would have been ‘pet abuse’ had that been a dog.

The monster stands back up, and attacks Vesta again.
Vesta receives its attack and counters it with a punch.
Cheep Sheep stumbles, and collapses.

As expected, it was really hard fighting bare-handed.
It might have been comfortable watching from the sideline, but for Vesta, who was fighting, it was a furious fight.

“Well done. For now, you better get some rest. Call me when you think you are ready.”
“No need. It only scratched me a little. I think I am alright.”

Eh? Was it just my imagination?
I thought Cheep sheep assaulted her without holding back.

“If you say you’re fine then you must be, I guess.”
“That aside, you can even use recovery magic! That is amazing.”

It was because I got the Monk job when I fought bare-handed before. Right now, even you have it.
I cast Plating on her again.

With this, the fighting bare-handed experiment is over.
Now, the only weapon left is hammer. But so far, hammer was relevant only to Master Smith?
Even I didn’t get any related job from using it.
Since Master Smith is a racial job of dwarves, Vesta won’t be able to get it.

“Do you know what is required to become a dragon knight?”
“Dragon Knight? Only the brave dragonkin can obtain that job. It is believed that you can become one when you fight monsters all alone.”
“I don’t know much details of it since it is racial job, even though I was reading a job-related book in the library yesterday.”

Vesta and Sherry answer.
Was Sherry gathering information relating to the jobs for us?
Good girl.

“There is no helping it since it is a racial job.”
“I am sorry.”
“Was there anything interesting there?”
“Yes, there was a job I have never heard about before. If I am not mistaken, it is called Gambler.”

Is there such a job?
I have not seen it so far.
I wonder how can I become one.
Is gambling even common here?

Maybe, something like stabbing a monster with a toothpick in my mouth until it dies?
If I do that, will I be able to become a dragon knight?
Since it is a dragonkin tribe's racial job, I can't become one.
I got absorbed just thinking about it.

Or maybe, I need to visit Konpira shrine?
I will probably die.
Like they say.
An Idiot can not be cured unless they die.

"Gambler, huh?"
"You know about it? It is my first time hearing this word, Gambler."
"Is that so? You know anything in this regard, Vesta?"
"I don't know."

Even Vesta doesn't know?
Since it is being translated as Gambler, it doesn't seem to be an unknown word.

"Is it something like a hidden job for the people from the back alley?"
"I see. It was indeed written that it's similar to Thief. Perhaps, it is a job related, somehow, to thieves."
"Are you sure it was not just random scribbles?"

Can you really trust something written as 'similar to Thief'?
Maybe it was just something written by someone on their dying bed?

"I don't know. 'I discovered an astonishing way to obtain this job, but there is not enough space to write it.' was written inside."

Is it Fermat's theorem? (TN: Fermat was a french mathematician)
Write it down properly next time!
It is a really serious matter.

"It is alright, perhaps."
"But there is one thing I still didn't get. Strangely, it was written that it

is also related to Bounty Hunter, too. It could really be just a prank."
"Oh. No, maybe it is not, after all."

When she said 'Bounty Hunter', I got it.
The Bounty Hunter skill, [Dead or Alive]. (TN: The skill name has been changed from Ignore Life and Death / Transcending Life and Death to Dead or Alive)
If you look at the name carefully, and the fact that you need to select a target to invoke it, Wouldn't that make [Dead or Alive] a single death blow skill?
But I have yet to succeed.

Maybe, it is a kind of skill that has a certain rate of success?
It's a gamble whether you can kill the target or not.
If it is gamble, then it is part of gambling world.
Maybe, the condition to acquire Gambler is successfully activating Dead or Alive skill? That is what I think.

"Oh, did you realize something from that?"
"No, I am not sure yet. But it was a good hint, nevertheless. Thank you."
"It wasn't much."

I haven't been successful with Dead or Alive skill thus far.
I think it is highly possible that the success rate is related to the level.
If any idiot could kill any monster without any limitation or restriction, Dead or Alive would be a broken skill.

Gambler seems to be a difficult-to-get job.
You need to level Warrior up to Lv30 first to get Bounty Hunter.
After that, you need to level up Bounty Hunter to increase the success rate of Dead or Alive skill.
It is also possible that I need to level up Thief as well.

Leveling up Thief in addition to Warrior and Bounty Hunter.
I doubt it will be generally known.

However, there is a compatibility between Thief and Bounty Hunter.
If a thief quits, they can work as a bounty hunter.
A bounty hunter can cross the line and fall to a thief's level.

Both are likely to happen.

There seems to be a person who managed to fulfill the condition and became a Gambler.
Since he was not able to publicly announce that he was a thief, I can understand that he could only write it in a book in the corner of the library.
For now, I can try to aim for it and see how it goes.
Because the job is difficult to obtain, I'm not sure yet whether I'll be successful or not.

For the time being, Dragon Knight is the priority.
Since you need to fight alone, will killing a monster by yourself meet the requirement to acquire the Dragon Knight job?
I bring out Durandal.

"Vesta, can you try fighting a monster by yourself using this sword?"
"Okay."

If she were to use Durandal, even if the first blow didn't work. the second one would surely kill it.
She will be able safely fight alone.

"Umm… This is the sword Master always uses, right?"
"Yes, it is."
"Even though you have never let me use it."

Roxanne complains in a low voice.
This is troublesome.

"Well… because it is a two-handed sword."
"It is not like I can't use a two-handed sword, at all."
"T-Then, do you want to try it, Roxanne?"
"Are you fine with it?"

I am the one who needs to ask if you're fine with it.
However, Roxanne's eyes were sparkling when I looked at her.
I can't help it.

"We can try it in order, I guess."
"Yes."

Roxanne takes Durandal exultantly.
She holds it like it is something very important.
She looks pleased. That's good, I guess.

Roxanne slowly pulls the sword out.
And advances just like that.

"Good. With this sword, go and kill it."

Cheep Sheep targets Roxanne.
Roxanne rushes to the monster, and swings Durandal down.
The sheep dies with the first blow.

"Amazing. Even I managed to kill the monster in a single blow. To have such an amazing weapon as this one, as expected of Master."

Roxanne hands over the dropped item and Durandal.
Rather, it should be I to say 'as expected of Roxanne'.
Being a Knight Lv20.

"Next, would Sherry like to try it?"
"Sure."
"Here you go."

I hand Sherry Durandal. Roxanne guides us to the next monster.
Would everyone like to try it, after all?
I don't think there is a chance to obtain anything expect for Dragon Knight. 'It is a waste of time' — is what I want to say.
Since even I don't have any related job, so it most likely is useless, really.

Sherry cuts the monster in half.
Her level is higher than Roxanne's, who switched her job midway. Also, because Master Smith has a job effect 'Increase in Strength', her physical attack power will be high, of course.
It is natural for it to be done in with the first strike.

"What an incredible sword. Anyways, with this sword, will we get any new job?"
"Nope. You will not get anything."
"Is that so? You hold truly an amazing sword, nonetheless."

As you would expect from Sherry.
She understands why I am having them partake in such activities.

“Does Miria want to try, too?”
“Yes, desu.”

As expected, Miria also kills it in single blow.

“How was it?”
“Amazing, desu.”

Miria’s ears stand erect. She returns Durandal while staring at it with great interest.
This has turned into a sword exhibition.
With this, I have exposed in broad daylight that my ability to kill monsters was all thanks to Durandal.
No, not yet. It is not an established fact yet.

“Vesta, try it now.”
“Understood.”

Even with Villager Lv5, Vesta defeated the monster in one blow.
With this, there is no longer any room for doubt.
It was all thanks to Durandal.

Even though it has been established as fact, Vesta acquires the Dragon Knight Job.
Rather than killing a monster final attack, the condition is to kill a monster all by yourself from the start.
The reason being, it will be difficult even for a dragonkin to kill a monster in one hit.

Dragon Knight Lv1.
Effects | Medium Increase in Endurance | Small Increase in Endurance | Minute Increase in Endurance
Skills | Dual Wielding | Critical Outbreak | Damage Reduction
There is some terrifying deviation in job effects.
What is… that?
As you would expect from a job with such a chuuni name.

And these skills, they are even more amazing.
That there is a skill called Dual Wielding, is it perhaps impossible for

normal people to wield two swords?
And with this Critical Outbreak skill?

There is an Increase in Critical Hit Rate skill in my bonus incantations.
I didn't feel any Critical or Outbreak while using Increase in Critical Hit Rate.
Perhaps, without having Critical Outbreak, it is impossible to use Increase in Critical Hit Rate?

Is Increase in Critical Hit Rate skill useless except for dragonkin?
Nope. There may be another job with Critical Outbreak skill. That's what I want to believe!

"What kind of skill is Damage Reduction?"

I can understand, though, what it means to some degree.

"You are asking me? I have never heard it before."
"Sherry?"
"I have heard about Physical Damage Reduction and Magic Damage Reduction skills, but as for Damage Reduction skill, I have never heard about it before."

It seems neither Sherry nor Vesta know about it.
Is it perhaps a passive skill?
Rather than the type that needs to be invoked, is it possible that it always reduces the damage received?
As you would expect from a job with such a cool chuuni name.

"When you say Damage Reduction, doesn't something strange happen?"
"Damage Reduction? No, nothing strange."

I have set Dragon Knight Lv1 as Vesta's job, but nothing seems to be happening.
So it is a passive skill, after all.
It would be strange for nothing to happen if it were an active skill.

"Dragon Knight, what kind of job is it?"
"A job held by only the righteous amongst the dragonkin tribe. It's a job they wield to protect their lord and friends."

I see. Does it mean that a dragon knight is basically a knight?

“Dragon Knight is a job that excels in defense. It is believed that the stability and safety of a party increases if they have a dragon knight.”

Sherry further explains.
No wonder. With that much Increase in Endurance, it will surely excel in defense.
So the three of them will form the line of defense.
Dragon Knight is a job that specializes in defense, huh?
The job effects are shared by the whole party.
Being a dragon knight, she can take a hit, surely.
But I am still not sure if Damage Reduction will work for the whole party or just her.

Since our party’s main attack force is my magic, it may be better to have a job specialized in defense.
I will leave Vesta’s job as Dragon Knight.

Chapter 128 - Damage Reduction

“Becoming a dragon knight is a dream of every dragonkin. I, too, would like to become a dragon knight to support Master and the party.”
“Well, Vesta is already a dragon knight.”

I try my best to say it casually.

“Do you want to go on as dragon knight?”
“Umm, but in order to become a dragon knight, you need years of training, and you must get recognized by the guild temple. As for me, I didn’t even fight that much.”
“It’s okay. Stretch your left hand out.”

Vesta shows me her left hand.
However, since my fifth job is Alchemy, and I am currently using Plating; I switch my fourth job, Monk, with Knight.
I invoke Intelligence Card Operation.
Intelligence Card comes out of Vesta’s left hand.

“Check it.”

Seeing is believing.
Vesta has checked my Intelligence Card before, so she should be able to read Brahim language.
Vesta looks at her own Intelligence Card.

“It is true… I have become a dragon knight!”
“Do you believe me now?”
“Umm, Dragon Knight… Err, Intelligence Card… Eh? My Master’s job was able to operate the Intelligence Cards?…”
“It is alright, Vesta. Because it’s Master.”

Roxanne tries to calm Vesta down.
Since we are in the labyrinth, we will be in trouble if she behaved like this.

“Because Vesta is a genius, she managed to acquire Dragon Knight,

I think.”
She may be confused for now, but she will get used to it eventually.
“Eh? No way!”
“Anyways, let us move to 10th floor.”
“We are going to try poison now?”
“Yeah.”

We move to 10th floor.
Apparently, Roxanne knows well as to why we are going to the 10th floor.

“We need NT Ant, then. This way.”

Under Roxanne’s guidance, we hunt NT Ants, and collect poison stingers.
Vesta devoted herself to learning by observation.
After collecting ten stingers, we return to 18th floor.

“Since I am a Dragon Knight now, somehow; I can fight, too.”
“Good girl. You will get to fight soon, but for now, wait.”
“Understood.”

Vesta is a Dragon Knight Lv1.
It is not good to send her to battle this early.
That said, I can’t have her keep observing forever.
It is so difficult to make a decision.

Before finishing the early morning hunt, Vesta reaches Dragon Knight Lv5.
When the level is low, the leveling speed is faster.
Is this much good enough?
Before having breakfast, I move to Quratar’s 7th floor.

By the way, while preparing breakfast, Vesta asked Sherry, “What kind of Job does Master have?” I heard it clearly, even though she whispered it to her.
Sherry seemed troubled on how to reply.
She seems to have neither confirmed it nor denied.

“From now on, while observing, Vesta will be fighting as well. Don’t push yourself too hard, though. If you find yourself in trouble, just

say so.”
“Okay.”
“I am sure it will be scary at first, but try to receive an attack from a monster on purpose. Since we fight in the labyrinth, it is impossible to avoid getting damaged. Depending on the damage you receive from the monsters, I am planning on moving to higher floors.”
“Yes. I believe I’ll be fine.”

Since the Dragon Knight job has Damage Reduction Skill, it will be safe to start from the 7th floor.
Cheep Sheep’s attack from Haruba’s 1st floor did not seem to inflict any damage.
Haruba’s 10th floor would do, I’m fairly sure. However, because NT Ants possess poison, it will be a hurdle for the first timers.
Quratar’s 7th floor’s Slow Rabbit seems more appropriate.

“Let’s go, then.”
“Umm, is it okay to keep using this weapon?”

Ah, that’s right.
Since she has become a dragon knight, she can dual wield now.
If she were to hold two Durandals, she would be a force beyond logic.
But it is impossible since I can’t produce two of them.

Sherry may have some suggestion regarding this matter, but when I look at her, she says nothing. There doesn’t seem to be any case where a master lets their slave equip stronger weapon than theirs.
If I select Durandal, there is no alluring experience buff.

“We will continue like this for a while. I will reconsider it depending on the circumstances.”
“I understand.”

Is it thanks to Dual Wielding skill that a dragon knight can equip a two-handed sword and a large shield?
I was of the idea that the large shield would not be required any time soon, but it may unexpectedly be needed sooner.
I will wait and see. If there’s no need for the shield, then she can go with two swords.
I will search for a large shield if I feel there is a need for one.

“Is it possible to equip two large shields?”
“Yes. A few dragonkin do that. But not many since attack power will decrease consequently.”

So equipping two large shields is possible, huh?
It would be super defensive style.
It’s better for situations where you receive too much damage and there’s no time/opportunity for recovery.

“Roxanne, can you please guide us to place with fewer Slow Rabbits?”
“Yes.”

We advance under Roxanne’s guidance.
A Monster comes out. A splendid, lone Slow Rabbit.
I cast a [Fireball] and wait.
Vesta goes to the front.

The Slow Rabbit approaches, and hurls its body at Vesta.
Vesta lays her shield down, and receives the attack to her stomach from the side.
After confirming that she received the attack, I finish the monster off with another [Fireball].

“How do you feel?”
“Err… Yes, I think I am alright.”

Vesta shakes her head in puzzlement.

“Did it hurt?”
“Nope. I am shocked because It didn’t hurt. It did about same damage as the Cheep Sheep I fought earlier. I am sorry, I think I blocked some of the damage with the shield, somehow.”
“I didn’t see it hitting the shield, at all.”
“Yes, it did not touch the shield, at all.”

Roxanne confirms that it wasn’t blocked with the shield.
If Roxanne says that, then it is definitely true.
Even though we advanced from 1st floor to 7th floor, her job changed from Villager to Dragon Knight, and she has Damage Reduction skill, too.

I guess such a thing is not impossible.

“In any case, It is good that the damage was small.”
“Yes.”

Because she had Plating, I expected the damage to be minimal to begin with.

“Should I assume there is no problem with 7th floor? or do you want to try once more?”
“I think there is no problem.”

Since I have received Vesta’s confirmation, I move to Haruba’s labyrinth.

“Although I said that, your next task is simply to throw these stingers.”

I hand Vesta the stingers.
I have her use poison on Haruba’s 1st floor.
To have only one monster come out on 1st floor is a problem, but there is nothing that can be done about it.

In order to finish it off with poison, I will need to beat it up until it is about to die, but there is a chance it may not work.
Considering it has 50% chance of success; on 10th floor, with three or four monsters coming out, at least one of them would survive if I used magic.
So 10th floor is actually more convenient, but I can’t say it is easy.
Also, on 10th floor, if we meet NT Ant, it will be a game of tag.

“Are these stingers?”
“Use it on the monster that survives my magic attack. Roxanne, please?”
“Yes.”

Against Cheep Sheep on Haruba’s 1st floor, I used a magic attack that should be able to barely kill it.
The monster managed to endure the magic attack, so I wait.
Roxanne keeps it distracted at the front. Vesta throws a stinger from the side.

“Poison, desu.”

Miria tries to inform.
Even I know this time around.
The color of the monster changes when it gets poison. However, with the NT Ant being black and the labyrinth being dark, it is difficult to confirm whether the poison has been inflicted or not. But I can if it is a white sheep.
Its color seems to have turned pale.

Is that how it looks when poisoned?
It looks more like sick than poisoned.
Is it not inflicting poison because it received posion?

The Cheep Sheep immediately drops down.
The trials to obtain jobs end with this.
Thereafter, while checking our status, I move up the floors one by one.

“Next is the 11th floor. Try receiving an attack from a Mino. Don’t force yourself, though. If it is bad, say so.”
“I think I will be fine.”

We move to the 11th floor.
Because I want to avoid the NT Ant’s poison attack on 10th floor.
Escape Goats from the 10th floor will be fine. However, since there was no issue with the 7th floor, the 11th floor would probably be possible, too.

Roxanne guides us to a place with only one Mino.
Vesta receives the monster’s attack.
I demolish the Mino with the second spell right after.

“How was it?”
“Yes, I am completely fine. This time, I received the attack for sure. I fought Mino outside the labyrinth before, but the attack this time didn’t feel any different.”

I had her try it without Plating this time, but there doesn’t seem to be any problem.

“Well, I think there is a difference between the Mino you fought

outside and the one inside the labyrinth, but are you really fine?”

Sherry butts in.
There is indeed a difference between the attack of a Lv1 monster outside and a Lv11 monster inside.
Her level has increased, and there is the effect of Damage Reduction, too. I shouldn’t have been worried.

“In any case, it is alright.”
“Both of them didn’t hurt that much, so there really is no difference.”

It didn’t hurt that much?
I can easily afford to move further up the floors.

“She didn’t get hurt, at all?”
“Hmm… as for me, the attacks I received from the monsters inside the labyrinth were quite stronger than the attacks from the monsters outside.”

Sherry looks at Roxanne as if calling for help, but Roxanne shakes her head in puzzlement.
She chose the wrong one to ask for help.
In Roxanne’s case, it is more surprising that she even received a monster’s attack outside the labyrinth.

“Then, let’s try Pig Hog from the 13th floor next.”

Because 12th floor’s Grass Bee has poison attack, I will pass.
We tried the attack of the 13th floor’s Pig Hog instead.

“Err…. like the Mino from before, there is hardly any damage. I can still afford more.”

This time, I casted Plating, so that must be the reason for there being no difference.
I ignore Sherry who’s muttering ‘even though it was a Pig Hog’.
Although the monsters appearing on 12th floor or above are a lot stronger than those appearing on 11th or lower floors, the difference was offset by Plating.
Plating can be used to reduce damage. I have already tested it by casting it on a monster.

“How about Sarracenia from 14th floor next? or do you think Clamshell from 16th floor would be better?”
“I think 16th floor would be better.”

She does seem to have more in reserve.
I move to the 16th floor.
Because the 15th floor’s Bitch Butterfly has paralysis attack, I decide to avoid it.

“Roxanne, do you know the location of the boss room on the 16th floor?”
“Yes. If I am not mistaken, it’s this way.”
“Then, let’s head to the boss room. If there is a Clamshell nearby, please guide us to it.”

I ask of Roxanne to guide us.
There is no identifiable difference inside the cave for me to be able to memorize the way.
She can find it using the smell, perhaps.

“Along the way, there is a group of Clamshell and Bitch Butterfly. There are several Clamshells.”
“It is dangerous since there is a large number.”
“There is just Clamshell in the opposite direction. Possibly more than one. If we take a right, there is a group of Clamshell and Bitch Butterfly. There is only one Clamshell, perhaps.”
“That way should be fine, then.”

One monster would be better to receive an attack on purpose.
However, although I intend to receive just one attack, if I receive successive attacks, we will be in a pinch.
It is troublesome to kill them one by one by using single target magic attacks.
It is also not a good idea to let the battle drag on for it is the 16th floor.

We advance under Roxanne’s guidance. We come across a group of one Clamshell and two Bitch Butterflies.
I cast [Breeze Storm].
If I attack Bitch Butterflies, whose weakness is wind magic, with wind magic, only the lone Clamshell will remain.

As expected, Roxanne knows what's going through my mind.

"Can't I just go forward ahead of time?"
"No, wait until I take out the Bitch Butterflies."
"Understood."

I hold Vesta back, and cast more wind spells.
It is great that she's motivated, I think.
Roxanne, Sherry, Miria; confront the monster.

When the butterflies collapse, everyone surrounds the remaining Clamshell.
I switch to [Sand Ball] and attack it.

Vesta exchanges places with Roxanne, and challenges it head on.
Vesta provokes the monster by hitting its shell with her steel sword.
The shell of the Clamshell moves slightly.
It is not coming out of its shell.

"Be prepared to receive either Water or Bite."

I wish there was a way for me to know beforehand.
When the Clamshell opens its shell, it either spits water or bites.
Both are more troublesome than normal body blow. It's probably not a good idea to receive it on purpose.

"Here comes the bite."

Can Roxanne really see through it?
I can't tell the two apart from its initial movement.
The Clamshell opens its shell wide. Just as Roxanne said, it tries to bite.
It jumps to attack Vesta.

Vesta repels it with her shield.
Woah.
She literally sent it flying.

The flying shell approaches her to attack again. It is trying to return the favour by slamming her with a body blow.
Vesta puts the shield down and receives the attack on purpose.
I attack it with another [Sand Ball] and finish it off.

Next, I apply Plating on Vesta again, and cast Heal.

“Even though we moved up two floors, it was alright. Ah, this much recovery is sufficient.”

I stop casting Heal on Vesta.
Just once was good enough?

“Don’t you need more?”

The effect of Damage Reduction skill is considerably huge, surely.
As it is going, even the 18th floor won’t be a problem.

Chapter 129 - Oyster

We resume heading to the boss room.
On the way, we encounter three Clamshells and one Bitch Butterfly.
It is the one Roxanne mentioned first.
I ambush them with [Sand Storm], while Roxanne heads out to take the vanguard's position.

"Wouldn't it be better if I head to the front?"
"Ah, I guess. Sherry, change places with Vesta."
"Okay."
"I will do my best."

Sherry and Vesta swap positions.
It would have been better if she just observed up till 18th floor, but since she herself proposed it, I guess it would be alright.
Being motivated really is great.
Since Sherry uses spear, she can attack even from the back.

"Since you are going to the front, take this."
"Okay. Thank you very much."

Sherry covers Vesta's head with Strengthened Hard Leather Hat, which she was wearing.
Vesta lowers her head and receives it.
It is indeed better for them to exchange it if they are to swap positions.

Starting from the left; Vesta, Roxanne, and Miria line up in front.
We wait for the monsters to arrive.
You can imagine how powerful my vanguards are.
The big Vesta in front is quite reliable.

At some point in the future, I will try placing Vesta in the centre.
Presently, Roxanne evades monsters' attacks and stays half-a-step forward to draw monsters' attention. It is not certain whether they recognize her as the main vanguard or not.
It's logical perspective.

“Here it comes.”

Roxanne’s voice resounds.
I wonder if it’s water attack from the Clamshell.
That guy, huh?
The Clamshell opens its shell.

Good timing.
Now who is it aiming at?
The shell spits water.
Roxanne tilts the upper half of her body a little to her right, and dodges the water.

This time, there were many for it to aim at, but it aims at the main vanguard, Roxanne.
The monsters seem to be able to properly determine which one is the main vanguard.

Sherry in the back evades the water that Roxanne dodged.
Sherry thrusts her spear through the space between Roxanne and Vesta.
There’s no problem for me since I can use magic from anywhere, so there is no reason for me to move away from behind Roxanne.
It’s an unexpected problem to this formation.

“Are you alright?”
“I managed to dodge it, somehow, so there’s no problem.”

Well, ‘do your best, Sherry’ is the best I can say to Sherry.
Two Clamshells and one Bitch Butterfly close in on the vanguards.
The Clamshell in the back, who spat water, turns around.
The vanguards block the monsters. Sherry thrusts the spear. I cast spells.

[Sand Storm] finishes off the Clamshells.
I managed to kill them before it could fire a second shot.
Vesta is able to play a vanguard role safely, too.
We seem to be able to fight properly, don’t we?

I sweep the remaining Bitch Butterfly right after.
It wasn’t a problem, at all, since it was surrounded by everyone.

After defeating one group of monsters, we enter the waiting room.

“This time, I will have you experience a boss battle. There is no need to deliberately receive an attack. Also, since I will be taking care of the small fry, you will confront the boss with Roxanne and the others, Vesta.”
“Understood.”

While I give instructions to Vesta, we head to the boss room.
To suddenly experience a boss battle on a higher floor… it would have been a better idea to let her gradually gain experience.
Currently, Roxanne will take on the boss from the front while the rest will surround it from the back.
However, the degree of difficulty will depend on the monster that will appear with the boss.

Smoke gathers, monsters appear.
An OysterShell and a Clamshell.
I go around to the opposite side for it may spit water.
While glancing at the four of them fighting the boss, I finish off the Clamshell with Durandal.

Vesta seems to be doing well, huh?
Roxanne dodges the boss’ attack by a hair’s breadth. She slashes at the same time.
Just by being large, she stands out.
And she is strong as well.

After sweeping the Clamshell up, I go next to Sherry and join the attack on the boss.
Sherry takes a step back and thrusts her spear from the back.
All of us surround it and attack.

No matter which floor’s boss it is, once it gets like this, it becomes one sided.
Oystershell can’t even land an attack.
As long as it is aiming for Roxanne.

Vesta strikes the monster from behind with her steel sword.
I heard ‘bokuu’ sound, the shell might have got dented. Anyways, the Oystershell has collapsed.

Did Vesta finish it off this time?
As the number of people increases, it will be harder for me to land the killing blow, I guess.

“You did it.”
“Yes, thank you very much. I am satisfied with the current level of my attack. Ever since I became a dragon knight, I have been noticing that some of my attacks are stronger than the rest and do more damage than I normally do. Perhaps, this attack was one of them.”

I see. Critical, huh?
So this was due to the Dragon Knight job’s Critical Outbreak skill.
The one using it seems to be able to notice it, too.
Because it is not an active skill, they don’t know about it being the Critical Outbreak skill.

And there is no apparent effect of the Critical Outbreak skill.
Had I not heard the loud sound from that spectacular attack, even I’m not sure if I would have noticed it.
Do only those receiving the critical strike notice it?
I would prefer not to notice it, then.

“Such an overwhelming attack it was. Can anyone else deliver such an attack beside a dragon knight?”
“I haven’t heard about it.”

I tried to ask Vesta if other jobs beside Dragon Knight have Critical Outbreak skill, but she doesn’t seem to be aware of any such job.

“Sherry?”
“I didn’t hear anything authentic, but if you are talking about a strong attack, then anyone can do it.”
“It is fine even if it is a rumor.”

I wonder if there are any rumors.

“Does Roxanne-san know anything related?”
“I don’t know but…”
“Apparently, when a beast warrior undergoes training for a long time, they can get the Beast King job. As for the King of Beasts, I have heard stories that he was able to do a massive attack.”

“Is that so? I didn’t know about that.”

As expected of Sherry. To know something that even Roxanne, who belongs to the wolfkin tribe, doesn’t know about.
Absolutely bewildering.
However, Beast King seems to be an advanced job for beast warriors.
Would it do even if you’re a wolf?

“As expected of Sherry.”
“But I don’t know if it is true or not.”

Is it possible that the Beast King job has the Critical Outbreak skill, too?
It is a racial job since it is an advanced job for beast warriors.
It is regrettable that I can’t get it.

However, both Dragon Knight and Beast King have it, seemingly, so it won’t be strange for other racial jobs to have it, too.
Wouldn’t it be possible for the advancement of Sex Maniac job to have the Critical Outbreak skill, too?

“Ah, give that volley to Vesta.”
“Yes, desu.”

I tell Miria as she picks up the item dropped by the Oystershell. Miria takes it to Vesta.

“Is that fine?”
“You probably need it.”
“Yes, thank you very much.”

Vesta receives the volley from Miria.

“Onee-chan, desu.”

For some reason, Miria is proud.
Well, it doesn’t matter either way.
She is looking at me as if she wants to say something.

I wonder if she wants to say something regarding the Beast King job.

“Let’s move to the 18th floor, then?”
“…Yes, desu.”

We leave the boss room.
Huh?
Miria has her head drooped.

Ah, I see.
I get what Miria wanted to say.

I am supposed to let Vesta experience 17th floor’s boss battle after 16th floor’s.
And she wants Quratar’s 17th floor instead of Haruba’s.
It is about Black Diamond Tuna.
That’s what it’s about.

“Ah, I just remembered something. I still have the lean tuna from the last time in my Item Box. Miria, we will use it for tomorrow’s dinner. Do you want to make something with it?”
“Yes, desu.”

This should be good enough for Miria to regain her enthusiasm.
However, from now on, it will be more difficult for me to land the killing blow on the boss.
I can promise to keep killing in Haruba until we get fatty tuna, but would it be alright?
It will be hard to keep killing Black Diamond Tuna until it drops fatty tuna.

How do I do it is the main problem.
Is Cook’s ‘Increased Rate of Rare Drop’ effective only if I deliver the finishing blow?
Or maybe I should change everyone to Cook and then challenge it?
But it will require a lot of work to reach Explorer Lv30.

Would the rate of rare drop increase by 5 times if everyone in the party is a cook?
Or not?
Even if I can’t confirm the rate of rare drop increasing by 5 times, I can confirm if it will work without my delivering the killing blow.
For future Black Diamond Tuna battles.

“Sherry, does Oystershell drop oyster?”
“Yes.”
“To celebrate Vesta joining our party, how about we have Oysters for dinner tonight?”

I propose.
Earlier, I fought Oystershell without selecting Cook.
My objective was volley.
Now I will select cook, and see how many oysters it drops.

“Because oyster is expensive, it is common for a master to sell it or eat it themselves. The possibility for us to eat it…”
“No, everyone will be eating it, of course. Vesta, too. You don’t want to eat it?”

Because Sherry starts spouting strange things, I ask for Vesta’s support.
It is useless to solicit Miria’s support for anything beside fish.

“Err… yes, if we can get one.”

Vesta can probably read the mood, too.
Good girl.

I use Dungeon Walk to move.
We jump from the small room to the waiting room. Before entering the boss room, I select Cook.
I leave Alchemist on, and remove Monk.

It is better to have Monk in case of emergencies, but with the way we are fighting at the moment, I don’t have to be worried.
And if I removed Alchemist, the Plating I cast would wear off. It would be a waste.
During the battle, I receive a body blow from the Clamshell. How amusing.
I can recover using Durandal’s HP Absorption skill.

This time around, I was the one to land the killing blow on the Oystershell.
The boss turns into smoke, dissipates, and leaves volley behind.
It didn’t work?

“Volley isn’t particularly bad.”
“I think it will be alright.”
“Vesta can have it, then. If it is about to run out, say so.”
“Yes, thank you very much.”

I may forget how many she has in stock, so I tell Vesta to inform me.
Even if I forget, it will be fine to leave it to her.
It may be difficult for her to inform me, her Master, so I have no choice but to make her do that.

We try again.
This time, even though it was Sherry who finished it off using her spear, an oyster was left behind.
When the smoke dissipates, a milky-white, jiggling object remains.
It is an oyster.

Is it only the content inside the shell?
It would somehow resemble volley if the shell was attached.
When I use Appraisal, it properly appears as oyster.
I pick it up carefully, and put it inside my Item Box.

“So, is this an oyster? How do we eat it.”
“You can bake it. Or probably boil it? I had it once when I was a kid, so I don’t remember the details.”

Sherry seems to have eaten it before.
Can’t we eat it raw?
Would it feel disgusting?
It is an item dropped by a monster, after all. So far, I haven’t attempted to eat one raw.

It’s about my palm’s size.
Oystershell seemed large, but I am not sure if this one can be considered large.
I would like one for everyone.
Because it was killed by Sherry this time, it is perhaps possible for the effect of Cook’s ‘Increased Rate of Rare Drop’ to be shared by other party members, so I need not kill it myself.

I try it once more to get one for everyone.

I try it again.
and again.

I try it many times.
I try it once again.
I keep saying it because it is important.

“It dropped one more. As expected of Master.”
“Amazing, desu.”
“Is that so?”

Roxanne and Miria are praising me.
No, not at all. I did it twenty or so times before I managed to get 5 pieces.
Yet, it wasn’t that bad.

I still don’t know if the effect of ‘Increase Rate of Rare Drop’ is shared by the party or not.
It didn’t always drop oyster when I killed it. However, it felt more likely for it to drop oyster when I killed it.
In the first place, I don’t even know the drop rate of oyster.

Well, I guess it will be alright when we fight Black Diamond Tuna.
I will not need 20 rounds to get one.
I move to the 18th floor.
There was no problem with the 16th floor, so the 18th floor will be fine, too, I guess.

“Until you receive an attack, Vesta, you only need to observe. If one of the monsters remains, step forward and try to receive its attack. There may be many poison-type monsters, so be careful.”
“Okay. It will probably be alright.”
“There is a group of Fly Traps and Clamshell around here. There seem to be multiple Fly Traps, but only one Clamshell.”

I thought we could fight only poison-type monsters, Fly Traps and Kettle Mermaids, but Roxanne easily found a group with just one Clamshell.
Roxanne is amazing.
First I sweep both the Fly Traps using [Fire Storm].
The problem with Clamshell is that it is strong against fire magic.

While I cast [Sand Ball], we surround the remaining Clamshell.
Vesta steps in front.
She receives a body blow from the Clamshell.

I apply Plating again, and cast another earth spell.
I tried to finish it off right away using magic, but it didn't drop down with just one.
Roxanne exchanges places with Vesta.
I cast another [Sand Ball]. The Clamshell collapses.

Like I thought, it took some time to deal with the shell.
It was fine, though, since we did not receive any other attack.

"How was it?"
"If it's this much, there is no problem. It might have been the effect of this hat, but I think I will be fine even with more attacks. Also, the shield may not be necessary anymore."
"Then, you do not have any problem with standing in front?"
"Yes. Ah, this much recovery is fine."

Vesta asks for me to stop after just one Heal.
You don't need a shield, even though it's the 18th floor?
Damage Reduction skill is fearsome.
It is perhaps thanks to Plating, too.

Chapter 130 - Miniskirt

Thereafter, we fought on the 18th floor.
Is Vesta having trouble?
She received many attacks, but she isn't complaining.

"Alright. I know it is a little early but how about we call it a day? We have yet to go shopping."
"We are going shopping?"

Roxanne jumps at it.
I was thinking of buying some stuff for Vesta.
Will Roxanne be fine with it even if the stuff is not for her?

I must buy a maid outfit and apron for Vesta.
Because of her large body, I'm not sure if a maid outfit will look good on her or not, but an apron will fit nicely.
It is also necessary to buy her a nightgown.

"We will go to the clothing store in the Imperial Capital first."
"A negligee for Vesta is necessary."

I can clearly see Roxanne's desire to choose.
It is better than complaining, though.

"For me?"
"I am going to have various outfits made for Vesta."
"Thank you very much."

Vesta bows her head.

"I know there was a lot of trouble today, it being the first day and all, but I look forward to your help from now on."
"Yes. I thought the monsters inside the labyrinth would be extremely tough, but they weren't that strong. I think I will be okay."

She is neither complaining nor whining.
When her Dragon Knight's level increases further, it will get even easier.

It is terrific, really.

I warp us to the Imperial Capital.
We head outside the adventurers' guild.
Vesta is not gawking around that much.

"Has Vesta visited the Imperial Capital before?"
"No, I haven't."
"Is that so?"
"It is because I am merely accompanying you."

I wonder if it's just that.
We proceed to go to the clothing store.

"We are here."
"Umm, but this is such an extravagant shop."
"It is alright."
"Is it really alright?"

I wonder if she will follow me inside.
I enter the shop.
Vesta, who was admiring the the entrance, follows me inside.

"Welcome. Great to see you back."

The usual male attendant approaches accompanied by two female assistants.

"Is it possible to make another apron like the one I ordered the other day?"
"Yes, of course."
"She will be the one to wear it this time."

I place my hands on Vesta's shoulders.
It will be quite large, about up to my face.

I don't think it will be problem, though, for it is Order-Made.

"Thank you very much. I will need to take the measurements, then."
"Here, please."

When the male attendant winks, the female assistant steps in front of Vesta.

She curtsies.
And shows Vesta the direction using her hands.

“Umm”
“Go.”

I thought for a moment and concluded that it would be better for her to do it individually.
It’s not like both of them need to try clothes on.

“Next is this one. Is there a size that will fit the girl from before?”

Roxanne and the rest move to satin camisole section.

“These are all ready-made, so these are all the sizes we have.”
“This one? Looks like she can put it on, probably.”
“I think the shoulder width is good enough.”

The female shop assistant answers.
They didn’t have a small one for Sherry either.
There can’t be that many sizes.

“Let me think.”
“But the hem seems to be a little small.”
“Hmm, what should we do?”
“If you need a different size, then you will need to place a special order.”

Is the hem short?
That is good in itself.

While Roxanne was in a dilemma, Vesta comes back.
Roxanne tries the camisole on Vesta’s body.
The hem of the camisole reaches Vesta’s knees.
Isn’t that a good length?

“As expected, it is too short, isn’t it?”
“It is indeed short.”
“Too short, desu.”
“I guess it is.”
“For now, let’s buy it. It is better than going to the trouble of having one made.”

I cut in a hurry as they were voicing same opinion.
No, No.
This length is long enough.

“Is that so? But it will be useless to expend on something she can’t wear.”
“It will be fine.”

There’s no such thing as ‘she can’t wear’, at least.
In this world, there is no schoolgirl wearing miniskirt.
Neither there is onee-san wearing miniskirt, nor onee-sama wearing miniskirt.
Like hell I will let this chance slip away.

“Only white and black colors are available for this size, however.”

Isn’t that good? Black.
Bewitching aura will match big Vesta perfectly.
As if I will let me myself get manipulated by the shop assistant into placing an order.

“Is black good, Vesta?”
“Is it alright?”
“It is alright.”

Sherry wears white.
Roxanne plays the central role, and picks black camisole.
Roxanne brings the item I chose.

“Then, can I order this as well? Also, take care of these rabbit furs.”

From my Item Box I take out rabbit furs, and leave them at the counter.

“Ah, was the dear customer not a member of the order of Harz knights?”

The male attendant mutters.
Did he think of me as a member of the order of knights.
My identity was discovered at the unlikeliest of places.

Is it about the timing of the rabbit furs?

Is it possible that a member of the order of knights is not supposed to sell at a store?
Nope. I have sold rabbit furs before.
Is there something else?

Because I don't think it is a good idea to ask, I checkout and leave the store.
It could cause trouble if backfired.

"That attendant seems to think Master is a member of the order of knights."

Roxanne speaks proudly as we came out of the store.

"I wonder what it was about."
"It is natural for anyone who sees Master. That attendant could see Master's greatness."

I am afraid as to how easy it is for people to deceive Roxanne.
'Click here to see the great Master'.

"Most of the people doing exploration are rude. Because you were showing proper manners, he assumed that you belong to the order of knights."

It sounds rational if Sherry says so.
What is considered manners by modern Japanese people, is considered proper manners here?
It is probably so.

"Brahim language, desu."

No wonder.
It is perhaps because I can speak Brahim.

"Ah, that's it."
"Yes, desu."

It is something only Miria, who is struggling with Brahim, can think of.
I pat her cat ears to praise her.

Next up is the armor shop.
I warp us to Quratar's adventurers' guild, then walk from there.

“Is this platemail?”
“Yes, It is.”

After we enter the store, I confirm with Vesta as we look for platemails.
Steel platemail.
This?

It is not full armor. Rather, it is basically a metal cylinder covering from shoulder up till waist.
As for the waist potion, there’s something, which resembles a skirt, fluttering. I’m in luck.
It’s not separate but integrated.

I wonder if she will look like a badly designed robot when she wears it.
But then, I wonder how you can even wear it. Maybe it can open up into two from the side?

It looks heavy no matter how you look at it.
I try to lift it by hand.
It is not to the point where I can’t hold it, but it is heavy.
Can you go around the labyrinth wearing this?

“Oh, this one here is frilly and looks better.”
“It has tassets, too. Other than that, it doesn’t look much different from mine.”

Sherry tells me about it.
Tassets?
Even if you say it is different, I don’t see any difference.
There are only three empty skill slots on it.

“It’s Heavy. Vesta, will you be able to wear it?”
“Let me see. I think it will be alright.”

Vesta raises the steel platemail.
That’s strange.
It seemed lighter when Vesta lifted it.
Maybe it gets subjected to correction when someone from the dragonkin tribe carries it?

“Will this armor be fine?”
“Yes, it is plenty. Thank you very much.”

I move to other shelves.
I choose steel gauntlets and steel demi-greaves to go with the platemail.
They are bracers and footwear made of steel.

Steel demi-greaves have knee-length leg guards attached to them.

From the equipment containing free skill slots, I let Vesta choose.
I pass on the head equipment.
She would look like a proper knight if she were to wear a full-face helm.
However, Strengthened Hard Leather Hat will go to waste if that happened.

“Choose the one you like.”
“Okay.”

I leave it to Vesta, and go back to the counter.
I hate carrying heavy objects.

“Large shield, you have any for sale?”
“The shield for dragonkin, eh? Sadly, I don’t have them here in my shop.”
“I see. In that case, I am good.”

I tried to ask the shop clerk, but as I suspected, he doesn’t sell large shields.
Since it is not here, there’s nothing I can do.
There doesn’t seem to be much damage on the 18th floor, so Vesta’s Dual Wielding is good for now.

“I would like this one.”

Vesta and the others bring protective gear over.
Sherry had steel gauntlets, Miria had steel demi-greaves, Vesta was carrying steel platemail in her arms.
She couldn’t carry them all?
It is quite difficult, indeed.

I pay the amount and put them in my Item Box.
Even the big platemail fits nicely inside the Item Box.
I am grateful.

“How about buying food ingredients after this? Since I will be cooking the oysters, can I ask of you to make another dish?”
“Please leave it to me.”

I ask of Roxanne after we left the armor shop.
Since no one seems to know how to cook oyster, I have to be the one to do it.
When we arrive at home, I wash the oysters well, then dredge them in wheat flour and sauté them in butter.
Once I apply the lemon juice, which I will ask Vesta to squeeze. It will be done.

Vesta squeezes the lemon with ease.
It feels like a small mandarin instead of a lemon that is being squeezed.
From now on, I will have her help me to the utmost of her ability.

The butter sautéed oyster went quite well.
The oysters were cooked pretty nicely. The inside is soft and rich in taste.
The sour tinge of the lemon added a good accent to the taste.

“The cooking of Master is absolutely the best.”
“It is as good as expected. I really feel like it had the same kind of taste as back then.”
“Tasty, desu.”
“Is it really okay for me to be eating such extravagant food?”

It seems popular with the four of them.

“Vesta, try on your protective gear after the dinner is over. It will be a problem if you get confused tomorrow morning.”
“Okay. Understood.”

I talk while eating an oyster.
Albeit large, because there was just one for each of us, the oysters vanished right away.

There is nothing I can do about it.

After the dinner, I had Vesta try on the platemail.
When I thought that it would be dark in the early morning, it is better to have her try it out once before that.

“How is it? You think you can wear it alone?”
“It may be difficult to wear it alone.”
“I thought so.”
“Do, desu.”

Miria opens the platemail and lifts it up.
She’s puts it on Vesta’s body, and closes it.
She seems to have fitted into it.

“Miria, thank you.”
“Onee-chan, desu.”
“Thank you very much.”

Vesta expresses her gratitude.
Next, she wears the demi-greaves.

“I should have put on the demi-greaves first.”

Vesta rues.
She puts the gauntlets on as well.
I guess it was hard for her to bend her body after wearing the platemail.
It was a good decision to have had her try it now.

The steel equipment are more stylish than I thought.
I was wrong to think she would look like a badly-designed robot.
Her body lines are being emphasized, without it being too tight.
Her figure is gorgeous.

No matter how you look at it, she looks like a reverse-trap.
There’s probably no such thing as reverse-trap in this world.
I would like to call her Oscar.

“It fits you well. Is it heavy?”
“A little bit, but I believe I will be fine.”

So it is heavy, after all, huh?
Is she perhaps not able to do anything but stand there?
After having her try them on, I make her take them off immediately.

Thereafter, I have her take off her clothes, and go to the bathroom.
To wipe the sweat off with hot water.
After cleaning the sweat, she puts on the camisole negligee.

“So, how is it, Vesta? You were able to put it on?”
“Yes. But umm, the hem is short.”

When I enter the bedroom, Vesta was wearing the black camisole.
Because of her big chest, the camisole looked more lifted than it was supposed to be.
Just like… a pyramid?
I would like to call it King Khufu.

“Ooh, Isn’t it better?”
“Thank you very much. But it is embarrassing since it is too short.”

The hem was a little above her knees.
It isn’t that short, even though it is called ‘mini’.
She will be embarrassed if her knee caps were visible, especially since miniskirt is not known in this world.
I would name it Twiggy.

That’s how enchanted I am.
In Japan, pushing down the girls wearing miniskirts was unthinkable.
Shit.
I can’t wait.

I make her sit down on the side of the bed.
Her thighs get exposed further when she sits down.
And because of the black colored camisole, her charm blooms even more.
This extreme charm can’t be imitated.

I pull Vesta into my embrace.
I touch her knees.
The soft and smooth feeling between the satin hem and her bare legs is incredible.

While my hands were feeling her body, my lips go for hers.
As for the order of kissing before going to sleep, Roxanne is last.
Which makes Vesta first.

I’m grateful for this order.
Good job me, who came up with this order.

Chapter 131 - 19th Floor

The last night was hot.
I was clinging to Vesta when I woke up this morning.
Her cold body felt good.
After spring, comes summer, apparently.

Under the dim light, I get up.
Miria brings my shirt in a frenzy.
Vesta required her help putting on her equipment.
Vesta expresses her gratitude.

“Miria, thanks.”
“Okay, desu.”

After I put on my equipment, I express my gratitude, too.
After having confirmed that everyone was geared up, I cast Warp.
Vesta is fine, apparently.

We move to the labyrinth.
It’s not particularly hot inside the labyrinth.
Temperature here seems to be maintained, somehow.
It must be cold outside Haruba for it is situated in the north.

Michio Kaga | Male | 17 years old
Explorer Lv44 | Hero Lv40 | Wizard Lv42 | Monk Lv42 | Bounty Hunter Lv1
Equipment | Rod of Offerings | Hard Leather Hat | Alba | Dragon Leather Gloves | Dragon Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Roxanne | ♀ | 16 years old
Knight Lv24
Equipment | Estoc | Steel Shield | Damascus Steel Forehead Protector | Dragon Leather Jacket | Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes of Willow | Sacrificial Misanga

Sherry | ♀ | 16 years old
Master Smith Lv33
Equipment | Steel Spear of Authority | Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail

| Water Resistant Leather Mittens | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Miria | ♀ | 15 years old
Diver Lv33
Equipment | Rapier | Iron Shield | Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat | Chainmail |
Hard Leather Gloves | Hard Leather Shoes | Sacrificial Misanga

Vesta | ♀ | 15 years old
Dragon Knight Lv11
Equipment | Steel Sword | Iron Sword | Strengthened Hard Leather Hat | Steel Platemail | Steel Gauntlets | Steel Demi-greaves | Sacrificial Misanga

Because Vesta now has better equipment, there's no need for Plating.
I decide to remove Alchemist in order to level up Bounty Hunter.
If I use Fourth job, I can reduce Required Experience to 1/20th and increase Gained Experience to 20x, but it can't be helped.

I can't do without Monk.
Explorer, Hero, and Wizard are indispensable, too, so I can't remove these four.
For the time being, if I need Cook or Warrior, I will select it as Fifth job.

"Vesta seems to be able to fight. For now, during the exploration, let her stand in the center of the front. There is no need to be worried about the number or the type of monsters."

I issue instructions to Roxanne.
Instead of adding a Fifth job, I decide to change the activity pattern in the labyrinth.
Since all the party members are here, there's no need to take it slow, is there?

My jobs hardly level up after going past Lv40.
Also, both Sherry's and Miria's jobs are leveling up slowly after hitting 30s.
It is probably because we are not challenging floors appropriate for

our level.
The only difference between Sherry & others and myself is the Required Experience 1/10th skill, If I'm not wrong.

As someone level 30-40, I am sure we are supposed to challenge higher floors.
If we move up the floors, the experience we gain will increase, and so will our level.
I was well aware of it but I put our safety first. However, it is about time to advance more aggressively.

During boss battles, we usually surround them, while I finish them off from the back.
When I step forward and use Durandal, I can use HP Absorption skill.
Roxanne, naturally, and Miria, too, hardly receive attacks.
It is perhaps more logical for us to challenge higher floors.

Even so, that doesn't mean I have to jump to a higher floor right away.
I will continue to move up one floor at a time like I have been.
I will have to speed up a bit, that's what I mean.

We advance mechanically along the wall of the labyrinth.
Roxanne is still guiding us, but I don't care about the monsters now.
We can change the direction according to the monsters ahead, but there is no need to stop.
The encounters with the groups of monsters have decreased. We are encountering lone monsters more.

One, or maybe two?
Or sometimes, a group of two Fly Traps and one Clamshell.
I am deeply moved by how Roxanne has managed to avoid them thus far.

I cast [Firestorm] on a group of two Fly Traps and one Clamshell, and prepare for the encounter.
The Clamshell is resistant to fire magic, but the Fly Traps are weak against fire. Since there is more of the latter, it is probably better to use it.
The vanguards and the monsters clash.

Roxanne with her estoc, Miria with her rapier, slash at them.
Vesta cuts them using her dual swords.
Vesta receives the counter attack of the Fly Trap using the steel sword in her right, and using the iron sword in her left hand, she smashes the monster down.
When the monster attacks her from the left, she blocks it using the iron sword in her left hand, and using the steel sword in her right, she smashes it on the ground with a swing from the top.

Is this the dual sword style?
It is terrifying.
What would I do if I were against an opponent like her?
There will be no problem if she can fend off monsters' attacks in this fashion.

After I finish off the Fly Traps using fire spell, we surround the remaining Clamshell.
It's especially scary when it attacks from the side.
Vesta takes it down using both her swords at the same time
The spectacle looks like someone beating a drum.

The Clamshell desperately hurls its body.
It tries to attack Vesta from the side, but Vesta receives it with her sword.
Rather than receiving the attack, it was more like offsetting the attack with a slash.

Had it attacked Roxanne instead, she would have dodged it lightly.
You can't tell if it is a Clamshell anymore.
I shoot a [Sand Ball]. The shell collapses.
It was settled immediately.

"It was a long battle but it didn't look like anyone had a hard time. I guess it will be fine if we advance to higher floors as we are."
"Yes. As we are, there should not be any problem."

Roxanne says.
Rather, if there were an enemy strong even for Roxanne, everyone except her would get wiped out.

"Vesta doesn't seem to have any problem."

“Yes, I am fine.”
“It was an impressive attack.”
“Thank you very much.”

Because I have changed her equipment, I am not using Plating anymore. I should perhaps let an attack hit Vesta on purpose, but I don’t want to make it a habit.
Receiving an attack is not a pleasant experience.
It is better not to force her do it.
And I made her do it only yesterday.

Judging from yesterday, I feel that she would be fine even if received several attacks.
At the very least, there is no chance for her to die from a single blow.
The way she fights, she will end up receiving an attack anyway.

Even though I was of that idea, we reached the boss room of Haruba’s 18th floor without Vesta having received a single attack.
Is it thanks to the change in our pattern of exploration?
I should be happy about the fact that she didn’t receive any attack.

I bring Durandal out, and enter the boss room.
I knock down the Kettle Mermaid and the Animal Trap.

During the boss battles, I could transfer Durandal to Vesta and became a fort myself. But it might not be the most offensive formation.
Since I can use Rush, it’s not a waste.
Even though I can make Vesta a warrior, too, I can use Incantation Interruption myself.
In addition, if I have Durandal, I can move freely in case something happens.

Now that I think about it, because I use Durandal, the boss battles feel naturally easier.
I wonder how the boss battles will go if I don’t use Durandal?
Will it be a tough fight?
As long as Roxanne continues to dodge.

In short, we seem to be able to win.

I mean, it's not like there's a need to use our maximum firepower.
As far as attacking capability is concerned, I can also use Durandal while casting spells.
Currently, however, there's no need for that.

"The monster native to Haruba's 19th floor is Rub Shrub."
"It's weak against fire magic, right?"
"That's right."

We proceed to 19th floor while Sherry briefs.
So, following Fly Traps on 18th floor, there are Rub Shrubs on 19th floor, both of which are weak against fire.
It looks like the battles on Haruba's 19th floor will be relatively easier.

"Roxanne, can you first guide us to a place with just Rub Shrubs, please?"
"Certainly. This way."

While advancing under Roxanne's guidance, we come across three Rub Shrubs.
Because there were only Rub Shrubs, I baked them well.

"What was that? Can't it fight, at all?"
"As expected of Master."

Not at all. Whether it can fight or not depends on whether the vanguards can take on its attacks or not.
That and my magic create a good balance resulting in this extermination speed.
As we move up the floors, the number of magic attacks required to finish them off will increase, too.

"It is still early but how about leaving the labyrinth for now, and then break through Quratar's 18th floor before the afternoon?"
"Very well. I guess it will be better."

After I obtain Roxanne's consent, we take some rest.
Vesta has yet to receive any attack.
I can safely bet on Quratar's 18th floor.

"Roxanne, along the way, try to find a place with a lot of Ma

Breams.”
“Understood.”

I hand Roxanne the map, and take us to Quratar’s 18th floor.
I remove Bounty Hunter Lv25 and select Cook.
As expected, Bounty Hunter leveled up quickly.

“Miria, we will be having lean tuna today, so how about having whole fish for dinner tomorrow?”
“Yes, desu.”

I shouldn’t spoil her too much.
I should avoid having a fish everyday.
We head to the boss room of Quratar’s 18th floor.

We advance under Roxanne’s guidance.
We fought a large number of Ma Breams.
We encounter a group of three Ma Breams and two Pig Hogs.
Pig Hog has resistance against earth magic, which is the weakness of Ma Bream, but the items they drop are important.

When I cast [Sandstorm], three Ma Breams and a Pig Hog step in front.
The remaining Pig Hog falls back.
Roxanne makes a preemptive attack, and thrusts her Estoc.
Vesta strikes using her swords as well.

One of the Ma Breams charges at Miria, but she blocks the attack using her shield.
Vesta receives the Pig Hog’s head butt with her iron sword, and returns the favor with an attack using her steel sword at the same time.
Two Mabreams start attacking Roxanne, who was in the center, but Roxanne manages to dodge them perfectly.
How did she even manage to dodge the attacks coming from left and right at the same time?

Yellow magic formation appears under the Pig Hog, but Sherry cancels it using her spear.
Another magic formation appears under the Pig Hog in the back.

“Here it comes.”

The Pig Hog spits out mud.
Roxanne easily dodges it, so does Sherry.
It seems there was no problem this time around, too.

I finish the three Ma Bream off with another [Sandstorm].
I then switch to [Water Storm], and tidy up the remaining two.
It took some time, but that’s okay.
Fighting against a group of monsters with opposite weaknesses and resistances, we managed to fight without any trouble.

“Whole fish, desu.”

Miria brings over the whole fish.
Apparently, One of the three Ma Breams dropped a whole fish.
With this, I now have two.

“Are two whole fish enough?”
“Yes, desu.”

When I ask Miria, she replies energetically.
But that’s just her.
Are two really enough for everyone?
Well, Vesta doesn’t particularly seem to eat a lot.

However, it would be troublesome if they were to hold a grudge against each other due to reduced share.
That said, it will be difficult to increase the serving to one each.
Is two fine, then?
Well, it’s your Onee-chan who decided that.

“Since we have got two whole fish, we will now head straight to the boss room.”
“Understood.”

I issue instructions to Roxanne, and remove Cook.
Vesta still hasn’t received any attack.
My next bet was on the small chance during the boss battle, but even that failed.

She did not receive any damage even during the boss battle.

Originally, during the boss battles, there is hardly any chance for anyone except for Roxanne to receive an attack.
Aside from me, who deals with the small fry at the start of the boss battle.
Incidentally, there is no chance for Roxanne to get hit.

“The monster native to Quratar’s 19th floor is Rtoll Troll. Its attacks don’t contain poison but there is a chance for its attacks to inflict paralysis. It is resistant to wind magic, and weak against fire magic.”

After finishing of the boss, we receive briefing from Sherry on 19th floor.

“Let’s try to fight at least once. Roxanne, please guide us.”
“This way.”

We proceed under Roxanne’s guidance.
Two hairy, grey monsters appear.
Rtoll Troll Lv19.
An ape man. No, it looks more like an old geezer you can find wandering on the streets.

I can’t tell where its eyes are since it is covered fully in hair.
Besides, it really looks bad.
It doesn’t resemble a human even a tiny bit.
It is a monster, after all.

I cast [Firestorm].
The Rtoll Trolls approach slowly with their big feet.
So huge.
Almost as big as Vesta.

When they close in, they raise their hairy arms up, and smack down.
Roxanne, with a sway, dodges it.
The second one attacks Miria.
Miria, too, manages to evade it, somehow.

Before we receive another attack, I cast another [Firestorm].
Vesta turns to it’s side, and attacks using both her swords.
Sherry pierces it with her spear.
Eventually, I burn them down using another fire spell. The Rtoll Trolls

drop down.

“This is all, huh?”

It was a monster we fought for first time, but it wasn’t a strong one.
It will stay like this up to 22nd floor, I guess.
Until the battles become more difficult, it will be hard to raise level by even 1, it seems.
If that’s the case, I guess we can afford to move further up.

“Even this floor is not much of a problem. As expected of Master.”
“Rtoll Trolls don’t pose any threat.”
“Yes, desu.”
“I think it will be alright.”

Setting what Roxanne said aside, if even Sherry says there is no problem with Rtoll Trolls, it must really be the case.

“Today, Vesta did not receive any attack on 18th floor. Will you be alright fighting on 19th floor like that?”
“Yes. I barely felt any pain from yesterday’s attacks, so I think I will be alright.”

Is Vesta really alright?
Because she herself says she is alright, I guess she really is.
There is a possibility that she has high tolerance for pain.
Nah, she realized it probably when I was healing her. She stopped me after just one cast, so I guess it is not the case.

Even if it is 19th floor, I don’t think she will be done in with a single blow.
And if it does come to pass, Sacrificial Misanga will activate.
I guess we will be fine fighting on 19th floor as we are.

Chapter 132 - Hamburger meat

“Is it nearly evening? We might stop here.”
“It is.”

We searched Haruba’s 19th floor until evening, and then I spoke with Roxanne and decided to finish it up.
Vesta wasn’t exposed to any attacks today afterall.

If there is only one demon, Roxanne takes it on. Miria is in the front if there is a second.
When the vanguard has three people, each of them is in a one vs one, and the difficulty isn’t that high.
We’ve gone through a lot of demons so far, but should we increase the difficulty?
Defeating a lot of demons at once is good efficiency, it’s the best way.

“We’ll go to the first floor before we finish. Please lead us to a Cheep Sheep.”
“Certainly.”

Before we finish, I test out [Life and Death] on the first floor.
Bounty Hunter is now Lv26.

It didn’t succeed.
Or maybe my expectation that it’s a skill that defeats demons in a single blow is wrong?
There’s no helping it, so I kill it with Durandal.

Kobold is weaker, so should I try the first floor of Quratar?
Is there no chance to do it there since it’s crowded?
I’ll probably have to keep trying it ever day.

“Are we doing an experiment?”
“A small one.”
“Really?”

Sherry asks with interest.

I don’t fight things I can kill in one stroke unless I’m doing something.
Sherry seems to have become familiar with how I do things.
It’s good.

We left Quratar’s first floor.
We then sold off our items in the adventurers guild.

“Todays dinner. Miria will cook the lean tuna.”
“Yes, desu.”
“Vesta can help me. I’ll make a meat dish.”
“I will? I understand.”

There is only one lean tuna.
Miria will want to eat the lot.
Therefore, I need to make a main meat dish.

“Then Sherry & I should make a soup and something else?”
“I’ll stir-fry some vegetarbles, can you make the soup Roxanne?”
“Okay, lets do that.”

Sherry seems to have made the decision for Roxanne as well.
We buy the ingredients, and then return to the house.

“Vesta, do you know about minced meat?”
“I’ve heard the name.”
“Oh, minced meat?”

Roxanne has a delicate expression.
Don’t you like it?
Sherry has a similar expression.

“We can’t do it?”
“Well…”
“Minced meat is believed to be eaten by poor, crude people. My grandfather never ate it.”

Sherry explains.
So there’s an annoying taboo like that.
There are people in places on earth that don’t eat pig or octopus too.
Is coming accross this sort of thing unavoidable?

“Master eats it…”
“Yes.”
“I don’t mind, because it’s master, but the fact that master eats it should be kept secret.”
Roxanne makes a reccomendation.
You’ll overlook the taboo?
It seems it’s a dish that the lower class eats.
People from the high class don’t seem to eat it.
Well, it’s definately not a luxury food.
“Is that so?”
“Yes, so please everyone keep this a secret.”
“That would be good.”
“Yes, desu.”
“Ok, I understand.”

Roxanne got approval from all the others.
They have “What?” or “Even this?” expressions.
It’s quite a variety.

“Will all of you be fine with a dish that uses minced meat?”
“There isn’t any problem in our case.”

It would be troublesome to change the menu now.
I should just make it, as planned.

“Can you make minced meat Vesta?”
“Ummm.”
“If you can finely chop meat then that’s good enough.”

Roxanne gives instructions to make it.
She seems to have made it before.

“I understand.”
“Then please make the minced meat.”
“Okay.”

The pig ribs from the Pig Hog, and the meat that I bought are passed to Vesta.
They should be suitable to make minced meat.

While Vesta is making the minced meat, I soak some bread in milk,

and fry some vegetables.
Firm vegetables like celery.
They are meant to have a crunchy texture, and I add some onion. It should be good with these vegetables.
I add some flour to it as well.

“Good, this is alright. Please mix it like this.”

After making the minced meat, it gets stirred.
Vesta is stirring it with salt, pepper, eggs, vegetables, and torn up bread.
It’s hamburger meat.

We cook it, and then fry some flour, wine, and mushroom in the remaining juices. I add some fish sauce as well, and leave it to boil over the fire.
I don’t know how hamburger meat is normally made, but it seems to be alright?
I put the sauce over it and carry it to the table.

I serve the soup along with the lean tuna that Miria cooked.
The hamburger meat is serverd with the gravy dripped over it.
Even though it’s the first time I made it, it turned out quite good.

“This is delicious. I can’t even notice the bread you added. As expected of Master.”
“Is that so? Using the bread as a filler softens it up.”

Roxanne knew about minced meat, and is probably thinking about a dish that bakes the mince.

“It’s really soft and delicious. Even though it’s something poor people eat, this is delicious, it may have to be reassesed. Even though it’s made from minced meat, it’s amazing.”

Meat is normally cooked intact and then eaten.
Unsuitable meat is turned into minced meat.
It’s understandable that it’s classified as a low class food.

“As expected, desu.”

Despite saying that, Miria’s target seems to be locked as the lean

tuna.
The broth it was cooked in is also quite good.

“I always get delicious things after coming here. I am very thankful for that.”
“Well, you’re the one who put the effort into this Vesta.”
“No, I didn’t do anything special.”

It takes quite a bit of effort to make minced meat on your own.
It’s easier to just cook steak.
Vesta helped though, so we’ll probably make it again some time.

The next day I raised Bounty Hunter to Lv30 and tried [Life and Death] again, but it failed.
The following day I tried again at Lv32, but no luck either.
Is something wrong?
Am I supposed to be doing something else?

Since it targets an enemy, I don’t think I’m doing anything wrong.
It’s different from skills like [Rush].
I can only trial it on demons.
What else can I do?

Maybe a dead demon will revive because of [Life and death], but that hasn’t happened yet either.
I don’t think a skill like revival would be easily available.
I had to raise Warrior to Lv30, so I guess I can’t say it was easy.

Maybe I need to use it more.
I used it five times on a Cheep Sheep before defeating it with Durandal, so that didn’t work either.
I decide to test it more often on the first floor, and start doing it on both my way into and out of the labyrinth starting the next day.
The effects were immediately apparent, and I succeeded after leaving Haruba’s labyrinth in the early morning.

A Cheep Sheep collapsed.
I only used [Life and Death].
A single shot.
There is no doubt that it’s a skill that kills in one blow.

“Oh?”

Roxanne noticed it straight away.

“It finally worked.”
“Um, did you do something Master?”
“Yes.”

I answered Roxanne’s question.
The opponent didn’t even stand a chance.
They couldn’t do a thing.
However, it used a lot of Mp.

I’ve failed at least 20 time since passing Lv30.
The success rate seems to be coniderably low.
It may not be dependant on level too.

“As expected…. it’s Master.”
“You’ve been doing an experiment like that up til now?”
“Amazing, desu.”
“It feels like something incredible.”

As Vesta said, [Life and Death] is an incredible skill.
When watching, it looks like the demon died when nothing happened to it.
Instead of Bounty Hunter, it seems like a skill for an Assassin.
There’s no evidence remaining, and no risk.

No, that’s only in my case.
Usually you can notice the incantation.
Since I have [Incantation Omission] I can take someones life with an innocent look.
It’s something to think about.

“This is definately a secret.”
“Of course.”

Everyone else gives a nod.
Quietly killing someone without approaching them.
It would be bad if such a thing came to light.

I checked my jobs.

Even though I succeeded at using [Life and Death], I do not have the Gambler's job.
It seems I'll have to level Thief.
I swap Bounty Hunter as my 5th job for Thief.

That day we reached the boss room for Haruba's 19th floor.
Yesterday we ate boiled whole fish.
Tonight we'll have lean tuna.
Either way, Miria will be delighted.

"The boss of Rub Shrub is Rough Shrub. Pay attention because it has a wide attack range, it's a troublesome demon."

Sherry gives an explanation, and then we enter the boss room.
Rough Shrub and Fly Trap appear.
Rough Shrub is a demon that is a similar size to the Rub Shrub.
It's branches extend further than the Rub Shrub though.

First of all, I defeat the Fly Trap using [Rush], since I had switched Thief for Warrior.
Then I joined in the surrounding of the Rough Shrub.
Since it's branches extend, it seems quite a serious opponent.

Rough Shrub swings it's branches.
Roxanne avoids it easily.
If you aren't careful, you can be attacked even at it's sides.

I attack it with [Rush].
But I get counter-attacked.

The branches are a nuisance.
They have a wide range and intense movements.
They are wild branches.

Their attack can probably be recovered with [HP absorbtion].
I continued attacking without worrying.
I use [Rush] many times.

Rub Shrub swings it's branch in return.
I ignore it, and cut it with Durandal.
It's become a slug-fest.
I depend on Durandal's [HP absorption] to continue fighting back.

Since I have Durandal, I won't be defeated.
I can endure the pain.
Even though it's a boss, I won't complain.
The pysical strength increase from Vesta's Dragon Knight might be helping as well.

I finished it off with [Rush].
When I swing Durandal, Rough Shrub shakes violently.
It's knocked down sideways and rolls.
Did we finally defeat it?

"That was amazing. As expected of Master."
"I was a little excited."
"Even though you received many attacks, are you alright?"

Vesta asks about it anxiously.
Unlike Roxanne, the demons attacks hit me, but it's not a problem.
It's not enough for me to worry about.
It's a bit pathetic.

"I can handle it. You said you were hit by demons before numerous times outside the labyrinth as well Vesta."
"That's right. I guess it's alright then."

Am I alright?
Even if it's a Lv1 demon, I don't want to be hit by any attacks.
I'm surprised at what happened as well.
TN: Berserker job aquired!

Though, Vesta has received attacks on the 19th floor and said that it's nothing.
It should be fine even if we go up to the 20th floor.

The boss becomes smoke and disappears.
An item is left behind.
Some kind of fluttering film.
I used [Analyze] and it showed as Wood Shavings.

It looks like it's been cut with a chisel.
Miria picks it up and brings it over.

"Wood Shavings?"

“It’s the material for anti-paralysis medicine.”

Sherry informs me.
It’s material for a medicine?
I switch job to Herbalist, and use [Herbal medicine generation] on the Wood Shavings.

The Wood Shavings in my hand became anti-paralysis medicine.
Some of them spilled from my hand.
I picked them up and placed some in my item box.

“Huh?… oh. It’s Master’s job?”

Vesta is surprised, but doesn’t seem confused.
She’s become used to it.

“Put some in your item box as well Sherry.”
“Okay.”

Sherry puts the anti-paralysis medicine in her item box.
It’s good to distribute it in case of an emergency.
Paralysis wears off after a while, so until now we haven’t bought any anti-paralysis medecine.

“Sherry, what demon is on Haruba’s 20th floor?”
“The demon on the 20th floor is the Hat Bat.”

The Hat Bat??
The Fly Trap and Rub Shrub have fire as their weakness.
The Hat Bat has multiple weaknesses, but fire isn’t one of them.
There’s no choice though.

We went to the 20th floor.
While exploring, we confirm the strength of the Lv20 demons.
Lv20 is a bit stronger.

It’s not our limit yet, but it gets more difficult every floor.
How far can we go in our present condition?
It should be fine until the 22nd floor.

Roxanne catches the charge of the Hat Bat with her shield.
Miria dodges an attack from a Rub Shrub.

Vesta also blocks the charge of a Hat Bat with her sword.
I use [Breeze Storm] to attack everything.

I have women fighting as the vanguard, while I shoot magic from the back.
Even if I think about it, there's no other option.
If I'm not hit, I won't need to use the [HP absorbtion] of Durandal.
As expected, it's unlikely that demons would get rapidly stronger here.

Chapter 133 - Coral

We searched for a safe location to have a rest and went to Quratar's 19th floor thereafter.
I hand Roxanne the map.

"Roxanne, can you please take us through the shortest route to the boss room?"
"What should I do if there is group of Ma Breams close by?"
"Ignore them… we will go to 17th floor later."

I added in a hurry because I got scared from Miria's stare.
I need to select Cook to be able to get a whole fish.
And the number of Ma Breams will probably decrease on this floor.
It will be better to hunt Ma Breams on 17th floor.

We head toward the boss room, kicking the monsters we encountered occasionally.
Rtoll Troll's punch looks heavy.
Would I become paralyzed if I received its attack?
I will go numb if I get hit with that, for sure.

Roxanne was easily evading the blows from the Rtoll Trolls.
Maybe it is easy to evade because of the big movement needed for that heavy blow.
If it is Roxanne, she can probably evade them even with her eyes closed.
Her dodging ability is terrifying.

Somehow, Miria is able to block them with her shield, too.
Vesta blocks Rtoll Troll's punch with one of her swords and pays back with the other sword.
Rather than blocking it from the front, I think she parried it from the side.
To be able to accomplish that with only one hand is really amazing.

I roast the monsters while the three confront them.
It should be fine with those three, right?

Do I only need to step forward if there is a problem, from now on?
Because we advanced according to the map, we arrived at the waiting room before I ran out of MP.

“Roll Troll is the boss version of Rtoll Troll. While I believe Roxanne-san will be alright, it seems to deliver intense attacks. It also has a roll attack skill. Also, you need to be cautious because it is capable of using lightning magic and you may get paralyzed if you receive the attack.”

It appears to be really strong from Sherry’s briefing.
But in reality, we can cancel both the magic and the attack skill.
Still, is it possible for a monster to use lightning magic?

We enter the boss room.
Two monsters show up.
A Roll Troll and a Rtoll Troll.
First, I need to ask the old geezer to leave.

I use Durandal to attack the Rtoll Troll.
I step back as I saw it raise its arms.
I match timing of the attack to evade.

I don’t know what the chance of paralysis from its attacks is, but I should avoid receiving any of its attack.
It is better to be careful.
It looked like the movement of its arms stopped when I used [Rush].
I keep attacking while watching the movements of Rtoll Troll.

I somehow managed to dodge the next punch.
It was quite difficult.
Since Roxanne is keeping the boss busy, will it be good idea if I ask either Miria or Vesta to attack the monster from the front?
Or will that make me look miserable?

It may not look as pathetic, perhaps.
However, if I received its attack and got paralyzed, I’ll be in trouble.
Even though Sherry has anti-paralysis pills, I will need to evacuate to safe location first to take the medicine.
Even if I assume that Roxanne will continue to take care of the boss, the whole formation will collapse.

While watching the monster's movements, I evoke another [Rush].
The Rtoll Troll collapses.
I somehow managed to defeat it without receiving any attack.
Without wasting time, I join the encirclement of the boss.

The boss Roll Troll, like the Rtoll Troll, is densely covered in gray hair. It is an ape man with bent back.
Because its back is bent, it is shorter than Vesta.
I wonder if it can straighten it.
And I wonder if it will be taller.

Roxanne dodges the Roll Troll's attack easily like it is nothing.
She swings her body a little and easily evade the next attack.

That attack looked quite scary, though.
A considerable wind pressure came just by having the attack from its strong arms pass by.
It should be much stronger since it is the boss.

Roxanne, like always, is evading the monster's attacks by mere millimeters.
Terrifying.
Well, as long as Roxanne can keep dodging, we will be able to finish it off with our encirclement.

With everybody surrounding it, I slash it.
I hit it with a [Rush]. Sherry pierces it with her spear. Vesta hammers it with her two swords.
Oh. Vesta's attack just now sounded like a critical.
She viciously hit the bent back of the Roll Troll.

Chance of Critical… apparently, it is not that high.
I mean, it doesn't really occur that frequently.
Maybe there are times when I missed it or didn't notice it?
Or is it really no more than a few percent?

Maybe it is level dependent and will increase as you level up? But the increase will not be that great.
Even with the bonus skill [Increase in Critical Rate], it doesn't increase that much.
Considering the fact that Increase in Critical Rate starts off with just

5%.
It can be increased by 30% if I use 63 points, therefore, it is hard to think that the basic critical rate is as much as 30%.

Maybe it is 70%?
I will get 100% adding both of them.
All my attacks will become critical.

Most likely, such a thing is impossible. Base critical rate won't be more than 5%.
It will be reasonable if it gets increased by 30%.
Even if it gets increased by 30%, it will be a little over 1/3.
Therefore, I can't depend on critical attacks in battles.

With all the members attacking, and I repeatedly hitting [Rush], we slaughter the Roll Troll.
It looks like Sherry's spear delivered the final blow.
The spear pierced it, the Roll Troll fell.

"From now on, let's split into two groups to beat the monster and the boss. Roxanne and Miria will keep the boss occupied. Can Vesta be the vanguard for the other one?"
"Certainly. I'll be fine."

I instruct Vesta.
Even though it is embarrassing to tell them the reason, if I get in a pinch, I will look pathetic.
I should prioritize safety above all.

The Roll Troll turns into smoke and disappears.
A whitish clump was left behind.
It is iron.
Is iron the item dropped by Roll Troll?

"Thank you."
"Yes, desu."
"If I'm not wrong, does the iron become raw material for iron equipment?"
"That's right. I can't use it yet, though. After 10 years of training, a master smith can stack Iron in order to make iron equipment."

While Miria hands me the iron, I hear the explanation from Sherry.
It is bothersome that a master smith is supposed to make equipment in order.
Apparently, they can't make a jump.
Assuming she is able to do it, is it possible to do anything with only one piece?
I will keep it in the storeroom since she will use it eventually.
Since they need 10 years of training, it is probably related to level,
But the level should be no problem in her case.
Hopefully, it doesn't rust.

"This is iron. iron."
"Iron, desu."

I teach Miria the name of the item and then proceed to 20th floor.
Since it is not related to fish, she will probably forget it by tomorrow.
I wish there was a fish with iron scales.
That would be spiral shell, wouldn't it?

"The monster native to Quratar's 20th floor is Rub Shrub."
"Rub Shrub, huh? Let's go to 17th floor after fighting once. Roxanne, can you please guide us to a place with Rub Shrubs?"
"Understood. This way then."

Under Roxanne's guidance, we fought just one group of Rub Shrubs.
After verifying its strength, we move to 17th floor.
After selecting Cook as fifth job, we hunt Ma Breams.

"Miria, I am planning on making whole fish fry tomorrow. What do you think?"
"Yes, desu."

A positive reply as usual.
There won't be any problem in making mayonnaise since we have Vesta now.
Sweet.

After obtaining two whole fish, we move back to 20th floor.
We explore until evening and then return to Quratar.

"Master, there is a message from Luke. He seems to have

successfully bid for Coral Monster Card.”

When we return home, there was a message from Luke.
Roxanne reads it.

“Coral? Sherry, what kind of skill does Coral Monster Card give?”
“If attached to a weapon, it gives Inflict Petrifaction skill. If attached to an armor, it give Petrifaction Defense skill. And the effect seems to get enhanced if fused together with a Kobold Monster Card.”

Petrifaction?
Is it a card that is not used much?
Looks interesting.

“Will my magic attacks inflict petrifaction if I attach it to my wand?”
“I have never heard about that. It is impossible, I’m afraid.”
“Well, let’s see. I will go pick it up tomorrow. For now, Vesta, can you make hamburger steak like the one we made the other day?”
“Certainly.”

I hand pork and meat to Vesta.
It will be aibiki, after all. (TN: Pork and beef ground together)

“Since Vesta will be making the hamburger steak, give me a hand, Miria.”
“Yes, desu.”

And so, I ask Miria to make mayonnaise.
Actually, I will be dividing the work between all members.
Roxanne and Sherry whip the eggs in their spare time.

The burden is ⅕ if you divide it between five people.
I blend it, too.
And it will be done with Vesta blending in the last.
Vesta keeps blending it.

While Vesta is blending the mayonnaise, I make the minced pork and meat into small and round balls instead of hamburger steak from last time. I then dredge it in slime starch and the fry it in oil.
After frying it, I apply sweet bean jam and sour vinegar, and then deep fry it.
This time, I am trying to make Chinese style meatballs instead of

hamburger steak.

The ingredients are almost the same but the taste may be different for the sauce is different.
Coiled in sweet red bean paste, the meat crumbles in your mouth.
And it is better since it is bite-size.

“This… this is really delicious and tender. As expected of Master.”
“It tastes different even though it was made the same way as last time. This is really delicious.”
“Amazing, desu.”
“This food is incredibly tasty.”

Looks like it is popular with the four of them.
None of them will think of minced meat as humble food anymore.

Next day. I went to the merchants’ guild to get the monster card after eating breakfast.
I asked Roxanne and others to do laundry and cleaning and, as usual, went there alone.
I call for Luke and go to the meeting room to buy the Coral Monster Card.

“I was thinking of using this one with a Kobold Monster Card. Can you bid for one?”

While receiving the card, I place another order.

“But you bought a Kobold Monster Card only recently.”
“It is convenient to have a spare.”

Currently, I still have one Kobold Monster Card remaining.
Therefore, I will have the fusion done immediately upon returning home.
If I have a spare, I won’t have to wait to fuse a card until he successfully bids for a Kobold Monster Card.
That’s great.

I wonder if I should ask him to obtain a batch next time.
This way, I can use a dropped monster card immediately.

“It will be convenient, surely.”

“I think you can order as many as you want as spare because the party that used to order it has now disappeared. Kobold Monster Card will become slightly cheaper, too.”

They were ordering quite a lot of Kobold Monster Cards in order to make a weapon with MP Absorption skill.
Because I delivered them the one made by Sherry, they shouldn’t need to place any more orders.

“The figure of 4,000 Nars appeared in the auction the other day after a long absence. If you’re willing to wait, since it is a spare, I can aim for a successful bid of 4,800 to 4,900 Nars, I think.”
“It is fine for the first card to be around 5,000 Nars. For the bid on the second one, however, try to lower the price.”
“Very well.”

Has it gone down a bit, after all?
It’ll be a bad decision if I don’t buy it.
If the successful bid is in this range, it’ll be great.

“I need a Goat Monster Card as well.”

I order a Goat Monster Card, too.
We need to move up the floors in order to increase our levels, but if we move to higher floors, the battles will become harder. The quickest way to solve this problem is by enhancing our weapons.
Since I already have a Sacred Spear, it will be good to attach 2x Intelligence skill.

“Will you be using it on the Sacred Spear?”
“Nope, it is for something else. Because of circumstances, I can’t tell you more than that. I am in need of just one.”
“Is that so?”

Luke knows I am carrying a Sacred Spear.
I mean, he was present during the trade.
Like Luke said, by fusing a Goat Monster Card with the Sacred Spear, I can double its power, but I can’t disclose this fact without having to buy more than one cards.
In reality, it is not necessary for me to buy a lot since I only need one card.

There won't be any problem if I happen to succeed from time to time, but if I always buy one card, it will raise suspicion.
I can use the excuse 'I somehow succeeded' from time to time, but this time, I'll use 'it is for something else' excuse.
It is really not necessary to tell him a reason. If I can just avoid the question, it'll be good enough.

"If Goat Monster Card appears within 5,500 Nars, bid on it, please."
"Understood. At this price, I think I will have a successful bid soon."

Earlier, I bought a Goat Monster Card at 5,400 Nars.
If I continued to bid when it was 5,400 Nars, I would already have another one by now.

No use living in the past.
It is still cheap, with only 100 Nars difference.
After placing order for a Goat Monster Card with Luke, I leave the merchants' guild.

Chapter 134 - Petrifaction

"In the future, I intend to have Miria equip a weapon with Inflict Petrifaction skill attached. However, should I attach the skill to Miria's rapier or the estoc?"

When we return home, I talk it over with everyone.
It's better to include everyone in the loop.
In the future, Miria will likely inherit Roxanne's estoc.

"It's a popular belief that a dragon knight best wield two weapons capable of inflicting abnormal status. I, however, don't believe that."

Sherry voices her opinion.

"Really?"
"When I say a weapon capable of inflicting abnormal status, it alludes that there's no surety it will inflict abnormal status. However, with two weapons, the likelihood will be higher."
"Is that so?"

Vesta doesn't seem to be aware of it either.

"Is that due to Dragon Knight's Dual Wielding skill? If you use two swords, will the effect be double?"
"No, I don't understand it fully either. There's no report suggesting that if you use two swords, the effect will be double."

So it's no good?
Or will it be effective?
Even though it is called Dual Wielding, it doesn't mean that you strike both the swords at the same time.
Since the effects of the skills don't take place at the same time, there's no meaning.

Let's assume that Inflict Petrifaction skill has 50% chance of inflicting petrifaction. If a dragon knight were to wield two weapons with Inflict Petrifaction skill attached, the total chance would be 100%.
However, it doesn't seem to be possible.

If the effects could stack, I would attach two skills on the same weapon.

Is that why she said that she doesn't believe it?
Sherry doesn't seem to believe it.
So, is it merely a myth, after all?

If you had Dual Wielding skill and wielded two swords capable of inflicting petrifaction, you would indeed be strong.
Somehow.
Well, not just 'somehow'.

"It seems to be no good."
"With Dual Wielding skill, albeit difficult, it is possible to attack the monster from the side and the back at the same time. If you take 'total' (overall) battle into account, the probability of inflicting abnormal status will indeed be higher. For example, if you use a sword capable of inflicting petrifaction and a sword capable of inflicting poison at the same time." (TN: 'Total' was used by the author but it doesn't go well with translation)

Well, if I were to attach both the skills capable of inflicting petrifaction and inflicting poison to the same weapon, wouldn't it be the same?
Everyone knows that, surely.
However, it's rare to attach multiple skills to the same weapon.

Therefore, she seems be discussing it based on the assumption of one skill per weapon.
In that case, dragon knights, who can wield two weapons, hold the advantage, certainly.

"But that's only if you attach one skill to one sword."
"Not at all. Ah, that…"

Sherry seems to be lost for words.
I must remind her that we can attach two skills to the same weapon.
If you attach multiple skills to the same weapon, the advantage of the dragon knights won't be as clear.
Using multiple skills with one attack is possible.

I'm not sure yet whether or not attaching the same skill more than once to the same weapon works but I'm sure that attaching different skills to the same weapon does work.
Both HP Absorption and MP Absorption skills of Durandal work.

"So making a weapon with Inflict Petrifaction skill for Miria seems to be better, after all."
"Yes, desu."

Miria seems to be enthusiastic.
But that's her usual reply.

If there's a weapon capable of inflicting abnormal status, the skill of Assassin which increases the chance of inflicting abnormal status will be effective.
Should I make someone other than Miria the assassin?
Assassin has another skill which increases the resistance against abnormal status. However, whether the job will be of use to Roxanne, who dodges everything, or not is hard to say.
If I were to make Vesta an assassin, the Dual Wielding skill of Dragon Knight would be unusable.

"Well, I don't understand it fully. However, if you want to attach Inflict Petrifaction skill to a weapon, I would suggested estoc. The higher the tier of the weapon the skill is attached to, the better."

Roxanne shares her opinion while holding out her estoc.
If Miria uses estoc, Roxanne will have to use rapier, which will be a step back.

"That's bad."
"That's not a problem."

When it comes to equipment, Roxanne doesn't seem to be as concerned.
But she's especially particular when it comes to order.
She seems to take what's better for the whole party into account.
That's good.

As a reward, I will soon have to buy her a weapon better than estoc.
To find another estoc may not be possible.

Therefore, it is best to attach the best skill you have to the best equipment you have.

I pass the estoc, which I received from Roxanne, to Sherry.
I take out the Coral Monster Card, which I bought just now, and the Kobold Monster Card which I already had at hand.
I hand the cards to Sherry.

“Because a Kobold Monster Card enhances the effect of a skill, it is better to use it with a better weapon.”

Sherry agrees with my idea, it seems.
She seems to have consented to attaching multiple skills to a one-handed sword instead of a two-handed sword.
I’m grateful.

“Umm, may I see the fusion?”

When I pass the sword and the monster cards to Sherry, Vesta hesitatingly asks.

“Are you fine with it?”
“Yes.”
“Okay then.”

I allow Vesta after confirming it with Sherry.
Even if she hadn’t asked, it’s not like I would have driven her away.
It has been the case until now.

“Well, I’ll be fusing it then.”

Sherry invokes Monster Card Fusion.
Sherry’s hands start glowing.

Estoc of Petrifaction | One-handed Sword
Skills | Annex Petrifaction | Empty | Empty | Empty

With the light having subsided, the fusion is over.
So it’s called Estoc of Petrifaction, huh?
As for the skill, it’s not Inflict Petrifaction but Annex Petrifaction.
It’s probably because of the Kobold Monster Card.

“Ooh, as expected of Sherry. It’s a success.”

“It’s a success?”
“Yeah.”

I show the Estoc of Petrifaction to Vesta.

“It’s amazing.”
“It’s Sherry who’s amazing.”

Roxanne compliments Sherry.
Sherry has a somewhat subtle expression about her face.
Because she knows that it was I who chose an equipment, which was bound to succeed, for fusion.

“Well then, Roxanne will be using this sword for a while. For now, Miria will only be observing.”
“Are you sure?”
“Okay, desu.”

I pass the Estoc of Petrifaction to Roxanne.
To acquire Assassin, you have to first be a Warrior Lv30.
Because I’ll be uneasy in having a Warrior Lv1 fight monsters, I ask her to observe for the time being.

From inside home, I warp us to Haruba’s 20th floor.
I switch Miria’s job from Diver Lv33 to Warrior Lv1.

“Sherry, swap places with Miria.”
“Understood.”
“Okay, desu.”
“Is there a meaning in having her observe from behind?”

Sherry is sharp.
The reason as to why I’m having Miria observe for now is because I have switched her job to Warrior Lv1.
If I didn’t change her job, Roxanne would be fighting with the rapier.

“It’s important to observe the battles from behind every now and then. Miria, can you use spear?”
“Use, desu.”

After successfully deceiving her, I hand the Sacred Spear to Miria.

“Well, you could say that.”

Sherry nods vaguely and exchanges hats with Miria.
When Miria becomes an assassin, the effect of Poison Resistant Hard Leather Hat will increase, too.
After I forcibly end this topic, we kick the exploration off.

Annex Petrifaction skill took unexpectedly long to succeed.
It’s the fourth group we have encountered. The monster has been petrified.
The Hat Bat that received Roxanne’s attack falls onto the ground.

“Fell, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria shout at the same time.
Miria seems to be observing Roxanne’s fighting style well.
I doubt she can use it as a reference.

The hat bat is lying on the ground, still.
It does seem to have been petrified.

“What happens when you get petrified?”
“You become as hard as stone. Consequently, you become resistant to physical attacks. However, you become vulnerable to magic attacks.”

While listening to Sherry, I swap places with Roxanne and send her in the back.
So, even if it has been petrified, it has to be finished off?
Inflict Petrifaction skill won’t be as effective for a party with no wizard.

I cast Firestorm.
As expected, the flames engulf the hat bat lying on the ground unmoved.
Although it has to be finished off even if it has been petrified, for it to receive an attack like that is convenient.
This skill is indeed great.

However, when it comes to the chance of inflicting petrifaction, it’s not that great.
Roxanne has attacked a dozen of times.

The ‘percent’ (probability) is low, I can say. (TN: ‘Percent’ was used by the author but it doesn’t go well with translation)
About same as Vesta’s critical strike.

I burn two Rub Shrubs to smoke.
Thereafter, I finish the still hat bat with a Breezeball.
Although it dodges attacks a lot, because it was unable to move, the attack was bull’s eye.

“So it becomes like this when it gets petrified.”
“Unlike paralysis, it can’t recover naturally if it’s petrified.”
“White, desu.”
“Really?”

Everyone watches the hat bat curiously as I poke it with the spear.
When it gets petrified, does it turn white?
I don’t get it.

“Roxanne, you wanna try once more?”

After I dispose off the hat bat, I ask Roxanne.

“Not at all, it’s enough for me. Thank you very much.”
“You wanna try, Sherry?”
“I’m not used to one-handed swords.”

Sherry doesn’t seem to be interested either.
I thought she was interested since she seemed curious but it doesn’t seem to be so.

“Well then, Roxanne. The chance of inflicting petrifaction doesn’t seem to be high. It’s for the sake of confirmation.”
“Umm, is it an experiment?”
“Correct.”
“Understood.”

It’s not really for the sake of confirmation.
I can confirm the probability with the warrior Miria, too.
However, she’s only Warrior Lv3 at the moment.
So I want you to keep at it for a while.

There’s another option. I can switch Roxanne’s job to Assassin but I

won't.
Because her Assassin job is only Lv1, it'll be risky.
Since job effects are shared by all party members, I can't afford to drop levels of more than one members.
And Vesta's Dragon Knight job is still at Lv24.

I leave the Estoc of Petrifaction with Roxanne and carry on hunting.
As for the second monster to get petrified, it was once again a Hat Bat.
Because Hat Bat's movement is erratic, due to which Roxanne engages it, is that the reason?
The petrified Hat Bat drops down.

A lone Rub Shrub remains.
I switch to Firestorm.
Roxanne and Vesta surround the rub shrub.
Sherry and Miria thrust their spears from a distance.

Earlier, I was using Breezestorm to get rid of the Hat Bat for it's more difficult to handle owing to its movement.
Because it's a troublesome monster, Roxanne was keeping it company. Because it's a troublesome monster, I was using the magic it's weak against. Now that it's down, there's no need.
Roxanne's and the Estoc of Petrifaction's compatibility doesn't seem to be high.
When I was making the decision, I didn't think it that far. I'm glad that I decided to have it made for Miria in the end.

I take a step back and cast another spell.
Although I had switched to fire spells, the Hat Bat turned into smoke nevertheless.
Proving that it becomes vulnerable to magic attacks when it gets petrified.
I finish the remaining Rub Shrub with a Fireball.

"In case of a weapon capable of inflicting abnormal status, choosing the enemies is difficult."

As you would expect from Sherry. She has identified the demerit of the Estoc of Petrifaction.
But can it really be called a demerit?

It’s more a matter of luxury.

“It would be more effective if a dragon knight were to dual wield. I agree now.”
“I see. It may indeed be true.”
“Is that really so?”

Vesta still doesn’t seem to get it.
Because it’s necessary, I’ll have to explain it.

“For example, we encounter a group of two Rub Shrubs and one Hat Bat. I will use fire spells, it being the weakness of the Rub Shrubs. Ideally, in this case, I would like to petrify the Hat Bat because even if I petrified a Rub Shrub, I would still use the same number of fire spells. If I petrify the Hat Bat, however, it will make it considerably easier. Do you get it?”
“Yes.”

The next petrifaction didn’t take too long.
Roxanne still had to attack over 20 times, though.
The chance of inflicting petrifaction really is low.

You could consider successful petrifaction a godsend.
So, as you would expect, successive petrifaction is impossible.
First, you can only target one of the monsters from a group.
Even then, it’s not a surety that they’ll get petrified.

If you aim for more monsters, it’ll only slow the process down.
After I make sure that Roxanne has translated it all to Miria, we proceed.

“If we come across a group of two Hat Bats and one Rub Shrub, since Hat Bats need to be taken out first, which one would you like me to petrify?”
“Rub Shrub.”
“Okay, I’ll petrify Rub Shrub then. In other words, if there are two swords capable of inflicting abnormal status, two people of ordinary jobs will be required to use the swords. However, if there is a dragon knight, they will be able to use both the swords alone. If two people were to attack the same target, it would be a distributed attack. However, if a dragon knight were to attack alone, it would be

a concentrated attack, hence easier for them to petrify the target.”
“Ah, I see. That is indeed so.”

To give a dragon knight two swords capable to inflicting abnormal status is the most optimum solution then?
Assassin job seems to be rare.

“Still, I’ll stick to my decision of having Miria use it. Miria can choose the monster herself. However, it will also depend on the formation of the vanguards. Therefore, to choose a monster will not always be possible.”
“I see. Understood.”
“Do, desu.”
“I think it’ll be alright.”

Issuing instructions every time is bothersome. Leaving it all to them is much easier.
Experiencing life and death situations inside the labyrinth will surely help Miria learn quickly.
That fish isn’t everything.

Chapter 135 - Gambler

"Well then, let's have Miria use the sword."

Roxanne and Miria exchange their swords.
I receive the Sacred Spear from Miria.
Miria has leveled up twice and is now Warrior Lv5.
Her being a Lv5 is still a cause of concern but it's alright for there's Plating.

After resetting the formation, we continue with the exploration.
Miria is persevering in the front.
It seems to be alright, doesn't it?
Well, the problem will be when she receives attacks.

"Did it, desu."

Right after Miria's words, a Fly Trap appears.
Annex Petrifaction seems to have been successfully invoked.
The Fly Trap has stopped moving.
It appears to have turned lime.

As expected, it's rare for petrifaction to be successful.
Miria had launched over a dozen attacks before she succeeded for the first time.
It's so rare that you almost forget it, really.

We leave the petrified Fly Trap aside and attack the Hat Bats.
I take on one of the two Hat Bats which Roxanne was playing with.
When it drop down from four monsters to three, it becomes easier for the vanguards.

I take out both the Hat Bats with a Breezestorm.
Roxanne and Miria surround the Rub Shrub which Vesta was keeping company.
I switch to fire spells and cast Firestorm.
Sparks engulf both the Rub Shrub and the Fly Trap.

The Fly Trap turns into smoke.

The Fly Trap died before the Rub Shrub.
It didn't collapse; it turned into smoke while standing.
Is this the way the petrified monsters die?

It would be dangerous if they were to fall in petrified form.
If I were to die after getting hit by a falling monster which had been petrified, it would be unsightly.
I didn't think about it earlier when the Hat Bat fell after it had been petrified.
I better instruct them not to petrify the aerial monsters.

I finish the remaining Rub Shrub off with a Fireball.
Because both the Fly Trap and the Rub Shrub are weak against fire magic, they would normally have died at the same time.
The Fly Trap died earlier than the Rub Shrub because it was petrified, most likely.
The petrified monsters do seem to become vulnerable to magic attacks.

"Good. Miria seems to be able to inflict petrifaction, too. Great."
"Yes, desu."

After I praise her, we carry on the exploration.
It wasn't until she was Warrior Lv8 that Miria came under attack.
The Hat Bat eludes her shield and crashes into Miria.

"Are you okay?"
"Okay, desu."

Such an answer returns to me while I was healing her.
Is she really okay?
While casting Heal, I take two Rub Shrubs out with a Firestorm.

Now that the remaining monster is one, Miria swaps places with Roxanne to confront the Hat Bat and raises her hand.
This much healing seems to be enough.
I attack the bat with a Breezeball.
Miria drifts to the side and slashes at it with her Estoc of Petrifaction.

I finish the Hat Bat off with another wind spell.

Thus far, if nasty Hat Bats were to appear, Roxanne would alone engage them in the front.
Now that she has a sword with Annex Petrifaction skill, Miria will have to confront them henceforth.
Miria's workload has now increased.

Because petrifaction hardly succeeds, I wonder if we should do it like we used to.
Should we really have to do it differently?
Although Hat Bat flies briskly and is therefore troublesome, Rub Shrub isn't easy to beat either.
If three Hat Bats were to appear, she would have to take on one anyway, she wouldn't say that she can't fight against a Hat Bat.

"It will get more difficult, so I'll be relying on you."
"Yes, desu."

After a few words of encouragement, we proceed.
After she levels up to Warrior Lv10 without receiving any attack, I remove Alchemist.
We can't have Plating on forever and it's not like we will be receiving attacks on purpose.
Now that she's a Lv10, it's a good opportunity.

We safely reach the noon break without Miria receiving another attack.
Thief, which I selected in place of Alchemist, has reached Lv30.
I check my jobs out.

Explorer Lv44, Hero Lv40, Wizard Lv42, Monk Lv42, Thief Lv30, Alchemist Lv34, Bounty Hunter Lv32, Cook 35, Herbalist Lv6, Sex Maniac Lv24, Warrior Lv30, Village Chief Lv1, Merchant Lv27, Swordsman Lv2, Weapons Merchant Lv1, Armor Merchant Lv1, Villager Lv6, Farmer Lv1, Knight Lv1, Assassin Lv1, Gambler Lv1

Ooh
It's there.
Gambler, that is.

Like I thought, it requires Thief Lv30.
The scribbling Sherry saw seems to be credible.

Cook needs Explorer Lv30; Knight needs Warrior Lv30.
There may be more jobs which need other jobs to be at Lv30.
And you can acquire those jobs if your other jobs reach Lv30.
Is there a derivative for my racial job, Sex Maniac, too, or not?

Gamber Lv1
Effects | Small Increase in Intelligence | Small Increase in Dexterity
Skills | Abnormal Status Resistance Down | Critical Outbreak

Gambler gives two small increments as job effects.
I disagree, however, with the fact that Gambler increases Dexterity.
Even if a gambler is skillful, in the end, they are simply con.

As for the skills, there's nothing related to scam. One of the skills increases the probability of inflicting abnormal status while the other increases the chance of critical strike.
A job which requires you to roll the dice at every attack, huh?
If you look at it that way, it does suit a gambler.

Abnormal Status Resistance Down seems to be an active skill.
When you invoke the skill, it requires you to select the target whose abnormal status resistance you want decreased.
It's not a passive skill which reduces your abnormal status resistance. I'm glad.

I'm glad that it doesn't reduce your abnormal status resistance but is rather an offensive skill.
It does suit a gambler.
'If you want meat, cut the bone first.' It's the same thing.

Ah, I wonder how it works.
I can try to reduce my abnormal status resistance for a while.
But there's no need for me to do that.

As it appears, Gambler is a job which drops resistance of the monsters to abnormal status and furthermore, increases the rate of your critical strikes.
It's a constitution of skills which a gambler would surely like.
Because they bet on all-or-nothing.

I try Gambler out when we move back to the labyrinth in the

afternoon.
To start off, I cast Abnormal Status Resistance Down on the monster which Miria is confronting.
Gambler's compatibility with Assassin is good.

The monster is still not petrified even after two attacks.
Miria has yet to become an assassin.

Because the probability of inflicting petrifaction is low to begin with, is that why it can't be helped?
Or does it have to be my attack for Abnormal Status Resistance Down to work?
Do I have to do it myself, after all?
There's a possibility that the extent to which it reduces the resistance depends on the job level.

Because I can feel that my MP is low, I can't afford to attack wastefully.
Should I make the next test last?
When we further the exploration, we encounter a group of two Hat Bats and a Fly Trap.
After I cast Breezestorm, Miria attacks the Fly Trap which I had already used Abnormal Status Resistance Down on.

The Fly Trap is still not petrified.
While ruing how useless it is, I take out two Hat Bats in eight Breezestorms.

Huh?
It was same as before.
On 20th floor, it should take nine spells of the attribute which they are weak against.

I was of the idea that I might have counted wrong but I finish the Fly Trap off in five Fireballs.
There's no mistake.

"The number of spells it took to finish off the Fly Trap is no more than previous floor."

I approach Sherry. She will have an answer, certainly.

“Not just that, it took less number of spells to kill the Hat Bats.”
“Really?”

I seem to have counted the spells cast on the Hat Bats wrong.
I thought that I counted properly; I guess not.
So it was like that.

What might have been the reason?
Was it the effect of Abnormal Status Resistance Down? That’s not possible.
I cast it on the Fly Trap but it worked on the Hat Bats? That’s not funny.
Even if it had been the case, it would have worked on one, not both.

Even if I counted it wrong in case of the Hat Bats, what about the Fly Trap? How did the number of spells it took to kill the Fly Trap decrease when it wasn’t even petrified?
It’s hard to imagine that magic resistance has anything to do with abnormal status resistance.
And I don’t have any such skill.

Does Abnormal Status Resistance Down inflicts random abnormal status?
I wonder how.
Resistance Down skill seems to be good.

Apart from that, it might have been due to Critical Outbreak.
If one of the wind spells was critical, it might have dealt huge damage for it being a weakness of the Hat Bats but it shouldn’t have been so in case of the Fly Trap.
It seems it was the case, though.
I wonder if magic attacks can be critical, too.
Nope, neither Dragon Knight nor Gambler have any spells.
I wonder if the passive skill, Critical Outbreak, increases the probability of critical strikes for the user regardless of the type of attack.
It seems to not be limited to physical attacks.

“This kind of things may happen from time to time. Don’t drop your guard until the monster collapses.”

There's no surety yet that a magic attack can be critical.
I tell everyone, not just Sherry.
If I keep talking to Sherry, I'm afraid that others may feel left out.

"To be able to do even such a thing, as expected of Master."
"I can't control it well."

Once or probably twice.
It'll probably be alright.

"Not at all. As you would expect."
"Amazing, desu."
"Is that so?"

Miria and Vesta have already been swindled by Roxanne.
Even if a magic attack were critical, it wouldn't be noticeable for there doesn't tend to be any identification, really.
This skill is everything but convenient.

I stop using Abnormal Status Resistance Down and observe.
There's no sign for a critical attack to have taken place.

Petrifaction did take place, however.
The moment I stopped using Abnormal Status Resistance Down, petrifaction was inflicted.
Is it really just low probability?

Vesta, too, seemed to hit a number of critical strikes.
I wonder if the rate of my critical strikes is less than Vesta's.
Nah, the damage must not equate to one magic attack unless there are at least two critical attacks, I think.
For the number of spells to decrease noticeably, its effect has to be considerable.

Having encountered who knows how many groups, I burn the Rub Shrubs to smoke in eight Firestorms.
This time, it was a group of two Rub Shrubs.

"This time around, it took less number of spells than usual."

Sherry was counting diligently, it seems.
Even though she was not counting earlier.

It’s her skeptical nature.

“Is that so? As expected of Master.”

‘Learn from Roxanne’ — is what I want to say to her.

“Un, the effect is not that big. Let’s do an experiment.”
“Experiment?”
“I don’t use it always; it will highlight the effect.”

I tell Sherry who seems to have become alert at the mention of ‘experiment’.
It’s difficult to explain the contents of this experiment to her.

It has happened two times already. If it happens once more, it will be valid to say that magic attacks can be critical.
‘What happens twice will happen thrice.’
And there’s a method to verify it.

At once, I pull Durandal out and restore my MP… By the way, Miria has successfully inflicted petrifaction.

“Did it, desu.”

When I take a glance, I find a Fly Trap hardened.

“Umm, isn’t it good?”
“Of course it is. Because it decreases the difficulty, it’s welcome. As expected, Miria.”
“Yes, desu.”

After I take out rest of the monsters, I answer Roxanne’s doubts and praise Miria.
For petrifaction increases physical defense, it’ll be difficult for me if I use Durandal.

Therefore, I’ll have to finish it off with magic attacks after taking out the rest.
Nope, there’s a way to finish it off with Durandal.
I hammer a Rush into the petrified Fly Trap.

By the way, There was no Critical Outbreak ever since I pulled Durandal out.

Because I had removed Gambler in favor of Warrior.
I replaced the job because there were a few things I was feeling unsatisfied about.
It's merely a matter of luxury.

The Fly Trap turned into smoke after a number of Rush's.
There seems to be no change compared to when it's not petrified.

"Amazing. As expected of Master."
"Physical attacks should not have worked on petrified monsters. It really was amazing."
"As expected, desu."
"It went down so easily. Amazing."

Like I thought.
Even if defense of the monsters, which have been inflicted with petrifaction, increases; the skill of Durandal, Ignore Defense, invalidates it.
In other words, it's all thanks to this sword.

I recover my MP and send Durandal back.
I allocate the bonus points freed up from removing Durandal to Increase in Critical Rate.
I increase Critical Rate to 30%.
With this, I can immediately ascertain if magic attacks can be critical or not.

I wait for next monster while proceeding with the exploration.
We encounter a group of one Hat Bat, one Rub Shrub and one Fly Trap.
I start off with a Firestorm.
The Rub Shrub and the Fly Trap turn into ashes in seven spells.

It's the effect of Increase in Critical Rate, surely.
It's an amazing effect. I'm fired up like I have never been before.
Critical… Outbreak certainly, solidly applies to magic attacks.

I was doubtful whether magic attacks can be critical or not.
The Hat Bat collapses in three Breezeballs.
My wind spells might have been critical, too.

With Increase in Critical Rate set at 30%, every one attack out of three turns out critical.
If I cast ten spells, a few of them will be critical.
As per rough estimate.

“What can I say now? Truly splendid. As expected of Master.”
“It was absolutely amazing.”
“As expected, desu.”
“That really was incredible.”

Sherry praises, finally.
But that’s expected for the result was amazing, indeed.

“Now that I have verified it, the experiment is over. I’ll undo it now. It’ll not be like this every time.”

Because I need to increase Gained Experience, I can not allocate points toward Increase in Critical Rate.
It’s a pity.

Chapter 136 - Moderate

Increase in Critical Rate, it is more useful that I thought.
It is a big advantage when magic spells turn out critical.
If I increase it to 30%, it should turn out at least once every battle.
The duration of the battles will shorten with that.

But there is a problem.
Increase in Critical Rate is a bonus skill. It requires me to use bonus points.
Whether I can use it or not depends on finding a good balance between using it with Increase in Gained Experience, Multiple Jobs or Durandal.
I guess it will be absolutely impossible to have 30% Increase in Critical Rate skill on all the time.

Additionally, since Critical Outbreak hardly ever invokes in first place, using Increase in Critical Rate is useless. Instead, I should invest on Gambler's skill set.
It is quite a chore to use Gambler in addition to Explorer, Hero, Wizard, and Monk.
Honestly, I wanted to use Fourth Job and have Required Experience set at 1/20th.
Do I have to compromise on Required Experience 1/20th?

Or maybe I should remove Hero?
It would be illogical if I reduced base offensive abilities by removing Hero in order to increase Critical Rate.
Because job effects are shared by all the party members, the highly effective Hero is hard to take off.

Should I remove Explorer then?
In case of Intelligence Card verification, I can change my job to Monk. When I am not using Item Box, Explorer is only useful for Intelligence Card Verification.
As for Item Box and Party Formation, I can leave Explorer to either Roxanne or Sherry.
Since the size of Item Box is level dependent, it will be troublesome

until it reaches a usable size.

I don't need to go that far, do I?
For the bonus points will decrease a bit if I remove Explorer.
If I forcibly use Required Experience 1/20th along with Fourth Job (after removing Explorer), I will not have enough bonus points to allocate toward Increase in Critical Rate.
And it will not make a big difference using Gambler without using Increase in Critical Rate.

For the chance of Critical Outbreak is really small.
Apparently, Vesta is not hitting critical strikes as much with Dragon Knight, so it will likely be the same for Gambler.

Wouldn't it be better to select Sixth Job instead and make Explorer, Hero, Wizard, Monk and Gambler a base set?
With this, I can also select Alchemist or Cook depending on the situation.
If I use Durandal, I can hit critical strikes by using Warrior and Gambler at the same time.

Nope, I think I should use Swordsman instead of Warrior.
Warrior's [Rush] and Swordsman's [Slash] are roughly the same skills.
Because [Slash] is Swordsman's skill, it is exclusive to sword, and I will only be using Durandal as weapon.
When I use Warrior, I bring out Durandal. Due to that, I reduce Gained Experience, so the conditions to level Warrior up will not be ideal.
It is better to level Swordsman up to Lv30 for the derivative job.
With Sixth Job, I can work on other jobs.

I open Character Reset interface in order to select Sixth Job.
Gambler will stay as Fifth Job. I will use Swordsman as Sixth Job.
I should train Swordsman quickly as it will be the job I will depend on when using Durandal.
As for Increase in Critical Rate, I will remove 30% Increase in Critical Rate and will only use (basic) Increase in Critical Rate.

Because Increase in Critical Rate uses bonus points, I can't have it on all the time.

I can't be too greedy for when I remove it later, the difficulty level of the battles will go up.
And there is a possibility that Sherry will question the difference in the frequency of its occurrence.
Since Critical Outbreak depends largely on the element of luck, I don't think I should rely on it too much.

If I increase Critical Rate, it becomes 10%. If I increase it further, it becomes 15%. It means that (basic) Increase in Critical Rate is 5%.
Neither big nor small.
I can manage it, somehow, since each increment requires just 1 point. It will be good to try this out.

Let's try Increase in Critical Rate first.
During the exploration, I took out the groups of monsters we encountered.

The number of spells it took to finish off the monsters was sometimes less, sometimes same.
Once every twenty since it is 5%, huh?
I wonder if it is like this.

It is simple.
Although simple, it is useful.
Since the duration of battles has shortened, I am grateful.
I am grateful for it being simple.

Because the number of spells it takes decreases by no more than one, I can't notice unless I count.
It is not to the extent where you can feel the difference.
On the other hand, if the effect were to the extent that it could be felt, I would be in trouble if it didn't invoke.
This also worries me.

It feels just about right.
Moderate. Just moderate.
Neither overkill nor non-existent.
Moderate can sometimes be best.

I bring out Durandal since I have expended plenty of my MP.
Since I have reached the point where I am using six jobs, the interval

between having to use Durandal has become shorter.
MP Recovery Rate 3x, which I had been using, was quietly effective.
I can't keep insisting on this or that. It can't be helped.

I will fight the Hat Bat, that appeared, with [Slash].
While watching the monster's movement, I set my sights on the place to be cut, and invoke [Slash].
While the bat, that was thrown into the air, was trying to regain its posture, I take a hack with a second [Slash].

Basically, there is not much difference between [Rush] and [Slash] when using sword.
I will be able to fight as I am used to.
I avoid the charge of the next Hat bat, and hit it with a [Slash] while it was trying to recover.

Ooh, this one was a critical.
Durandal knocked the bat up powerfully into the air.
The Hat Bat is trembling greatly.

Apparently, even [Slash] can turn out critical.
Even magic can, too.
As for Critical Outbreak, it is like rolling a dice for it to invoke with any and every attack I can use.

"Did it, desu."

Miria exclaims in a low voice.
The Hat Bat, that Miria was keeping company, falls to the ground.
It wasn't related to my Critical Outbreak. Rather, it seems she managed to successfully inflict petrifaction.

Roxanne is confronting a Rub Shrub while Miria and Vesta are taking on a Hat Bat each, so no one noticed my critical hit.
Even Sherry. Ever since I brought Durandal out, and the fact that she knows about it possessing Incantation Interruption skill, she didn't feel the need to keep watch over me.
I shift my focus back to the Hat Bat, and strike [Slash] again while it was trying to regain its posture.
The monster fell to the ground and turned into smoke.

Next, I take on the Rub Shrub which Roxanne was keeping company.
It was an easy kill since I was attacking it from the side.
Finally, only the petrified Hat Bat remains.

“Ha, what do we do with this one?”

I must finish this Hat Bat off but it is tiny.
Furthermore, since it has fallen onto the ground, it is hard to cut.
Should I take it out with magic attack then?

“This one looks difficult.”

Roxanne, too, tilts her head, puzzled.
I hold Durandal in reverse grip, and thrust it in like you dig the earth with a stick.
I can feel my MP recovering.
Is it good enough?

“It seems to be working. It was thanks to Miria. As expected of Miria.”
“Yes, desu.”

Feeling relieved from seeing Miria smile, I invoke [Slash].
It was troublesome, so I attack it without using [Slash].
I hit the Hat Bat mechanically.
I feel like a worker on a construction site.

Oh, the blow right now went deep.
It was probably critical.
This time, everyone saw it but it doesn’t look like they noticed it.
How is that possible?

While attacking the petrified Hat Bat, I hit the ground several times.
It looks like I have finished it off.
The Hat Bat turns into smoke.

Thereafter, we continue to explore until the evening.
Because today is the day the apron will be ready, I finished the exploration early.
After receiving the apron from the Imperial Capital, I return home.
From today onward, Vesta will be wearing apron while helping with cooking.

“Vesta, can you make breadcrumbs?”
“Breadcrumbs?”
“You can ask someone how to make it.”
“Understood.”

I give instructions to Vesta who has put the apron on.
Her chest, covered by apron, looks soft and mellow.
The large bulge on the apron makes it even more alluring.
The intense impact softens, creating a soothing ambiance that of the Eden.

The fascinating softness and gentle suppleness are showing from her whole body.
However, because it is big, the frills look a little dull.
Moderate is the best.

As for the breadcrumbs, since Roxanne has given the nod, it seems to be okay.
After giving instructions, I head to the bathroom to prepare the bath.
Midway, when I went to recover my MP, the breadcrumbs were ready.
Vesta was helping with cutting vegetables.

“Thank you. Looks like it is done.”
“Yes, I will be done with this one as well.”

It seems she is useful in very many ways.

“Vesta, can you make boiled egg?”
“I would be able to, I think.”
“Then boil one until it hardens, please.”
“Understood.”

I ask more of Vesta.

“Roxanne, can you help me with the labyrinth as usual?”
“Yes.”

I move to the labyrinth with Roxanne.
When I finished recovering MP, Vesta was boiling the egg.

“Oh, you are doing great. After that, use this boiled water to scald

the vegetables.”

She scalds the vegetables lightly, after which, I put the remainder in the bath.

“Master, the boiled egg.”

When I was done preparing the bath, the egg was boiled.

“Thank you. Then squeeze this fellow.”
“Okay.”

I have her squeeze a lemon.
I chop the scalded vegetables finely; mix it with mayonnaise, mashed boiled egg and lemon juice; sprinkle salt and pepper on it. Tartar sauce is ready.
I receive the frying pan from Miria who had already mixed breadcrumbs and a whole fish. I add tartar sauce to it.
I should have better made Miria cut the fish.

“Delicious, desu.”
“This is amazing. It is the first time I ate something like this.”

Miria likes it, unsurprisingly. Vesta seems to have favorable opinion, too.
I am glad.
Since fried food seems to go well, should I go with pork cutlet tomorrow?

After the meal, everyone enters the bathroom.
I first wash the four of them with soap.
Time-wise, it’s inefficient to wash the bodies of the four of them but I don’t feel like waiving my right.
Isn’t it my enjoyment once every ten days?

I shouldn’t confuse means with purpose.
I don’t wash their bodies to live, I live to wash their bodies.
I enjoy this moment of my life.
This moment is my life.

I took a plenty of time and cleaned their bodies thoroughly.
I have no shred of regret in my life.

After having my body washed by all of them, we enter the bath.
It gets slightly cramped when everyone enters, but there is no problem.

“Even though the temperature of hot water has gone down a bit, it is still good.”
“Yes, it is comfortable.”

Roxanne sticks close to me since the bath is cramped.
Touching her smooth skin while in hot water.
There is no problem.
No problem, at all.

“Miria, are you feeling comfortable, too?”
“Yes, desu.”

Miria, as usual, is floating near my feet.
Vesta soaks in hot water, lying close by.
Huh?
What is that thing floating?

I had a feeling that something was floating, but I shouldn’t care about it.
I am worried about Sherry across of me.
Moderate is the best.
The best is moderate.

I have them wear the aprons again after the bath.
This time, it’s the second, silk apron which I had tailored for them.
When Vesta wears it, the contrast looks similar to that between the top and the foot of a mountain.
The open range defense line tempts me in.

Th-This is a trap.
It is a trap to capture me, just like birdlime.
However, even if you know it is a trap, sometimes in life, you just know that you must go.

When is a good time to go?
Now is a good time to go.

I slide my hand in from the unprotected gap.

The apron is supposed to be used like this.
My hand is caught between the smooth, silky, satin, cloth and Vesta's smooth, moist skin.

My fingers lightly catch soft balls of meat.
Soft and mellow.

I bury my fingers in without using any force.
Inside rich and soft matter.
Between love and luxury.

From between my fingers, flesh overflows.
While I was having pleasure from the soft feeling in my hands, it was oozing out of my fingers.
The flesh was gently overflowing from between my fingers.
Wonderful.

Earlier, I said moderate is the best. That was a lie.
Going to the edge is life.
Going to the edge is pleasure.

You don't die twice or thrice, you die once.

(by Sei Shonagon)

Even though I discovered a truth of life, I went exploring normally the next day.
As for Increase in Critical Rate, I will probably stop after increasing it once.
If I have extra points, there are a variety of things I want to try out.

Chapter 137 - Stone Statue

Thanks to petrifaction and critical, the battles became easier.
Especially petrifaction. If it proc's, the battle is like half done.
Still, I must not drop my guard.

Having a few numbers to begin with and to have one suddenly lose the ability to fight.
It can heavily affect the battle.
Adding critical into the mix will be like an Ogre with an iron club.
Roxanne, Miria and the others are coordinating well. Once Miria takes care of her monster, she moves to help the others out.

However, petrifaction does not proc that much.
It is even less than the critical rate of my magic attacks after activating Increase in Critical Rate.
There is still some hope for when Miria reaches Warrior Lv30 and acquires Assassin.

Both of them depend on luck, that is the only problem.
When 5 monsters, which is the maximum number of monsters per group on this floor, appear; what will happen if neither petrifaction nor critical proc's?
While it may not be problem here on 20th floor, but if I depend on petrifaction or critical after 20th floor, I may be in a pinch if they don't proc.

With that thought, I remove 5% Increase in Critical Rate.
As it uses bonus points, it means Increase in Critical Rate can't be in use all the time.
I can afford to increase it further, but it will be better for the gap to be smaller when I remove it.

"Master, there is a message from Mr. Luke. He seems to have successfully acquired a Kobold Monster Card."
"Kobold? Would tomorrow do?"

Evening. When we return home after the exploration, there was a

note from Luke.
For next enchantment, should I wait for Goat Monster Card?
The sooner his bid succeeds, the better.
It is not like battles are getting particularly harder, though.

Since I will not be able to use the Kobold Monster Card immediately, I will go get it tomorrow morning.
We start preparing dinner.
It's gonna be pork cutlet tonight.
I have Vesta cut the meat and make breadcrumbs.

"I have finished making breadcrumbs."
"Thank you. Things got easier thanks to Vesta's help. I am glad that Vesta came to our home."
"It is me who should be glad that I came here. What are you going to make?"

I had spare time since Vesta was helping me, so I decided to make crepe during that time.
I mix milk, wheat flour, sugar and eggs.
I didn't have any prior plan of making crepe, but I thought that something soft will be nice with the little milk we have left.

"It is a little test. Just stay there and watch."
"Okay."

I pour the mixture, it spreads out inside the frying pan.
I only made one since it was only a test.
I used the whole dough.
It flows on the frying pan like syrup.

Was it too diluted?
It would be better if milk were a little less.
Still, I can't say it is a failure yet.

Since the frying pan is well heated, it will harden soon.
I think the crepe made in the stalls had somewhat similar feeling.
It is probably good enough for something made the first time.
After a while, I fold it……

Ah, it is a failure, indeed.

When I tried to fold the crepe, it had burned inside the frying pan. It didn't come off well, it had crumpled.
Should I have been more careful?
Or should I have taken it out of the frying pan before folding it?

It is fine since today was just a test.
I cut the crepe into 5 pieces.
I put the first piece in my mouth.

Oh, it tastes just like crepe.
It looks like I managed to make a normal crepe.
Baking Isobe was impossible, but I was able to make crepe.
The softness, however, is probably not the same.

"It is something I made as a test. Each of you gets to eat one piece."

I offer it to the four of them.

"If it is something made by Master, I will enjoy it."

Roxanne takes a piece first.
It seems like the order is important.
Because I cut it roughly, however, the size seems different.
It is hard to cut it into 5 equal pieces.

"Because this one was a test, it will be the real deal next time."

It's troublesome, though, as I have raised a hurdle for me because of their anticipation.

"This is Amazing. As expected of Master."
"It's soft, sweet and delicious."
"Amazing, desu."
"It's delicious. I didn't know there was something in this world that could be so fluffy, so puffy and so delicious."

Sherry, Miria and Vesta take a piece in order and eat it.
All four of them seem to be rejoiced.
I probably made a normal crepe.
Vesta especially seemed to like it.

“You never ate something like this before, Vesta?”
“Yes. I never imagined a day would ever come when I could eat delicious food. Thank you very much for the food everyday. No matter how much appreciation and gratitude I have toward Master, it will not be enough.”

The stimulus apparently was too strong for Vesta.
But she still has some pork cutlet remaining.

Vesta was deeply impressed with the pork cutlet but it probably wasn’t at the same level as crepe.
She could have the same deep impression but I couldn’t feel it since it was the same.
I could have missed that feeling because she had the same level of gratitude for both.

I ask her to express her gratitude through actions.
Vesta has been active from the beginning, but lately, she has gradually become more sticky in addition to that.
It is a good tendency.

Next Morning. I go and receive the Kobold Monster Card.
Since it is a spare and it has no use for now, we enter the labyrinth.
Immediately after entering, we arrive at the boss room of Haruba’s 20th floor.
The exploration advanced smoothly.

Appearing before us is a Hat Bat and the boss, Pat Bat.
After smoke gathered, two monsters appeared.
I immediately rush to the small fry to get rid of it.

Vesta faces the Hat Bat from the front.
‘Why are you blocking my way?’ — is what I thought but I was the one who told her to do that during the boss battles.
I totally forgot about it.
I’m in a dilemma, though, whether I should be grateful or not.

Hat Bat flies around briskly, so it is difficult to hit it from the side when someone else is keeping it company from the front.
If both of us attacked it from the front, we would probably be able to finish it off quickly.

And because I have Durandal, I will recover the damage with HP Absorption.

Well, it can't be helped.
If I issued instructions after the monster came out, it would be too late.
Because I won't be attacked if I hit from the side, it will be easy.
So I mustn't complain.

The Hat Bat attacks Vesta.
The monster is switching between between left and right, eluding Vesta's swords.
I approach it, making a big detour from the side.

I somehow manage to reach the Hat Bat before it fixes its posture in the air, and unleash [Slash].
The monster attacks Vesta again, it eludes again and moves opposite of me to the left.

It was an unpleasant move.
I'm sure it was not intentional.
Or was that its natural movement, perhaps?

I chase it in a hurry, but I wasn't able to arrive in time to perform [Slash].
Next, I attack one step ahead. I strike the place, where Vesta warded it off to, with Durandal.
Oops
The sound was good this time. Maybe this one was critical?

I land another blow on the Hat Bat that was trying to regain its balance.
The monster attacks Vesta.
I hit the place, where Vesta repelled it to, with Durandal and unleash another [Slash].
The Hat Bat drops down.

Finally dead?
I was danced around by the Hat Bat. It wasted a lot of time.
Without taking a breather, I join in the encirclement of the boss.

As for the boss bat, Roxanne warded off all its attacks using her shield without moving around too much. She took care of it.
As expected of Roxanne.

“There was a big blow midway. As expected of Master.”

After knocking the boss down, Roxanne compliments me.

“Thank you.”
“As expected, desu.”
“Mine seems to be a characteristic of Dragon Knight job, but you are amazing, being able to do the same.”

And just like that, Roxanne coaxed everyone.
Actually, two critical strikes hit the Pat Bat.
Vesta, as well, landed a critical hit.
But why didn’t Miria manage to inflict petrifaction?

“Sherry, can abnormal status be inflicted to the boss?”
“There are some reports. The chance, however, is quite low.”
“Is that so?”

I ask the sole person who Roxanne didn’t manage to coax, Sherry, and the answer to the question satisfactorily returns to me.
Is it difficult for the boss to receive abnormal status?
It is to be expected since it is the boss, I guess.

Rather, isn’t it the situation where you are supposed to use Abnormal Status Resistance Down?
Currently, since I have Sixth Job selected, I’m using both Gambler and Swordsman simultaneously.
That’s why critical proc’d.
I will try it next time.

“The monster native to 21st floor is Rtoll troll.”

After Sherry briefs, we move to 21st floor.
Rtoll troll, huh?
That means Ma Bream will be on the next, 22nd, floor.

“Let’s explore 21st floor since it is still morning. After the noon break, we will move to Quratar’s labyrinth. After clearing 20th floor, we will

go to 17th floor. Agreed, Miria?"
"Yes, desu."

Even though Ma Bream has been pushed to the last, Miria doesn't seem disappointed.
Probably because she knows we will be going there in any case.
What if we encounter problem in clearing 22nd floor?
Maybe I should not proceed to the next floor after 22nd floor.

Nah, should I stay on 22nd floor and hunt the boss until I get fatty tuna?
And Ma Bream will appear on 23rd floor, too.
That's a clever cover up.
When I have enough to put on my table is the time when I break through to 23rd floor.

"We will go for two whole fish and have them for tomorrow's dinner. I will leave the cooking to Miria."
"Yes, desu."

I motivate Miria and continue with exploring the labyrinth.
Motivation will not increase the chance of petrifaction, though, most likely.
While advancing at good pace, we come across a group of 3 Rtoll Trolls and 1 Rub Shrub.

I welcome them with a [Firestorm].
Rtoll Trolls are weak against fire magic like Fly Traps from 18th floor and Rub Shrubs from 19th floor.
I appreciate having Rtoll Trolls appear on 21st floor rather than getting sandwiched by Ma Breams.

After casting the spell, I wait for the monsters.
Rtoll Troll is relatively large, but the three of them along with a Rub Shrub are all lined up in front.
You can feel the intensity from their standing side by side like this.
When the vanguards hit them, they hit back.

Their punches are powerful.
Roxanne lightly dodges it, Miria avoids it, and Vesta parries it with her sword.

Roxanne skillfully maneuvers her upper body and dodges the attack of the Fly Trap next. (TN: I think the author is confused between Fly Trap and Rub Shrub)

During the exchange with Fly Trap, Miria was keeping the Rtoll Troll company.
Even though Fly Trap's poison attack is troublesome, Rtoll Troll's attack is intense.
I would appreciate it if any of them got petrified.

In the end, without anyone getting petrified, all four monsters were killed at the same time by a fire spell.
Since the number of spells I cast increased, I don't think critical proc'd.
But there is also a possibility that critical proc'd within that number.

The problem is how to accurately calculate the number of times critical proc's.
Should I start off by removing Gambler first?
Do I really need to go that far?
After all, there is a chance of inflicting petrifaction, too, without critical proc'ing.

And it is not like critical proc's that much anyway.
The duration of battle will extend by 10% at worst. It is not that bad if you think about it.

The next group we encounter comprises one Rtoll Troll and two Hat Bats.
I shower them with [Waterstorm].
It was easy for me to decide this time because they were two-to-one, but which one would I defeat first if they were one each?
Should it be Rtoll Troll first due to paralysis attack?

Vesta wards off the Hat Bat's charge.
Vesta is growing quickly. She has now gotten used to dealing with Hat Bats' attacks.
As I thought, dealing with Rtoll Troll should be priority.

The Rtoll Troll raises his arms.
This heavy blow seems to be especially heavy.

However, before he could smack his arms down, the Rtoll Troll's suddenly stops moving.

"Did it, desu."

It seems to have been petrified.
With its arms up, it was petrified.

It looks kinda like a two-meter long stone statue.
Those raised arms look terrifying.
Like they will come crashing any moment.

Well, it was attacking after all.
If people were to see this sculpture, they would probably get terrified by it.
It looks more realistic than Laocoon.

The scene of a troll trying to attack Goliath.
The Troll of Samothrace.
The thinking old-man.
Isn't it thinking too much?

Rather, it is closer to the work Unkei and Kaikei?
Vajra Troll Statue.
If it were the statue of Buddha, would it be called Troll's Penance Statue?
And it won't even get old with time.

After finishing the Hat Bats with a water spell, I clear the stone statue with a Fireball.
The Rtoll Troll turns into smoke right away.
Even after becoming stone, it's weak against fire — pitiful.

Chapter 138 - Queen

It seems we can handle fighting on Haruba's 21st floor.
Though it's becoming a little harder every floor.
It will probably be a problem after all on the 23rd floor.

During the day we go to Quratar's 20th floor with the map.
Fire magic is the weakness of Rub Shrub and Rtoll Troll, so Quratar's 20th floor is quite easy.
We made it to the boss room without encountering many Ma Bream or Pig Hog.

It doesn't matter if we encounter Ma Bream or not.
We can visit the 17th floor afterwards, so there is no problem.
I don't think Miria will be upset.

I pull out Durandal as we wait in the waiting room.
There seems to be a party currently in there, so the boss door remains closed.

"It seems to be a bit busy."
"I think it's because of the medicine."

Sherry informs us.
This is the boss that drops the Wood Shavings?
It's a bad time for it too.
There seems to be a lot of people around in the early afternoon.

While we are waiting, another party enters the standby room.
We are supposed to be in the Labyrinths in the Harz Duchy, as requested by the Duke of Harz.
Meeting people isn't the best.
It's possible to make an excuse though.

When that time comes, let's blame the fish lover, Miria.
Because Miria wanted fish, and we have not reached the 22nd floor at Haruba yet.
I'll do that.
It's not the right floor for us.

The combat from the previous party ended, and the boss door opened so we went inside.
The equipment lying around… there wasn't any.
The party hunting the boss for medicine must have had enough ability.

Smoke gathers in the center of the room.
Two demons appear.
The Rough Shrub boss, and Rtoll Troll.
Vesta blocks the front of the Rtoll Troll.

After using [Abnormal resistance decrease] on the Rough Shrub since Miria is fighting it, I attacked the Rtoll Troll.
When Vesta dodges an attack, I drive a [Slash] into that spot.
While Vesta is exchanging blows with the Rtoll Troll, I attack from the side with Durandal.

It's easier when there is a vanguard to block the front.
The instruction was useful this time.
I use [Slash] in rapid succession, and the Rtoll Troll is knocked down.

Vesta and I joined the encirclement of the Rough Shrub.
Even with [Abnormal resistance decrease], petrification doesn't seem to have happened.
Well, I didn't expect things to be that easy.

I brandish Durandal towards the boss.
Since Roxanne is handling the front of Rough Shrub easily, lets try not to get hit by attacks this time.
I need to watch the demons movements carefully.

A branch moves and attacks Roxanne.
Roxanne easily avoids it.
She pierced it with the rapier in the process.

Movements like that, they are impossible for me.
The branches flail wildly, and there is no chance.
It's hard enough to dodge, let alone consider attacking as well.

Do not get hit by an attack.

Watch the movement of the demon.
Oh.
The movement stopped.

“I did it, desu!”

Oh. It’s petrified?
Rough Shrub has become hard.
The colour has become a little white too.

“Oh. It’s as Sherry said. The boss does have a chance to petrify.”
“Yes, though it’s supposed to be considerably rare.”
“As expected, Miria is great.”
“Yes, desu.”

Did [Abnormal resistance decrease] help out?
However, I praise Miria.
It’s Miria that uses the Estoc of Petrifaction to fight.

I use Durandal on the petrified boss.
I slash it over and over.
It’s become petrified, so the possibility of it counter attacking is zero.

It reminds me of old times, of practicing kendo with continuous swings.
It’s the same as that.
It’s nostalgic.

The boss was killed by my continuous attacks.
There might have been some criticals, but it’s hard to tell with no changes.
Rough Shrub became smoke.

Even if you are a boss, you’re just a sand bag if you are petrified.
After making anti-paralysis medicine we continued on to the 21st floor.

“The demon on Quratar’s 21st floor is the kettle mermaid.”
“The kettle mermaid? Lets try fighting it once, and then we’ll go to the 17th floor. Roxanne, can you take us somewhere with Kettle Mermaids?”
“I understand. This way.”

We head out with Roxanne's guidance.
We've fought the Kettle Mermaid before, but this time we have criticals and petrification so I don't think we can judge strength from our previous experience.
One fight will do for now.

There's always the chance of some unexpected danger.
It isn't bad to try it once.
We fight it once, and then go to the 17th floor.
It's rather rare that something unexpected happens.

We hunt Ma Bream until we have two Whole Fish, and then we return to Haruba's labyrinth.
After returning to Haruba's labyrinth, I test the effects of [Abnormal resistance decrease].
The boss was petrified, so did [Abnormal resistance decrease] contribute to that?
I'll test it out using regular demons.

Another demon is petrified, but the chance still seems quite low.
The chance of petrification was already quite small, so I can't make an exact estimate.
Boss battles are quite long, and there may be no result even if [Abnormal resistance decrease] is used.
Is it easier to use Bounty Hunter's [Life and Death] with [Abnormal resistance decrease] active? That won't be solved by just thinking about it.

The experiment also uses a lot of MP, so I stop it after a while.
I will use [Abnormal resistance decrease] against bosses in the future.
We continued on exploring like normal until evening.
We left the labyrinth, and bought ingredients in Quratar.

"I'm planning on making something extra, so I'll leave dinner to everyone else today. Vesta can help me as well."
"Okay."

First, I went to the liquor store.
I bought some wine used for cooking from the liquor store.
It's the first time I've bought wine.

“Sherry, is there a strong liquor distilled from a sweet fruit wine?”
“There is, it’s a liqueur.”

Liqueur?
I’ve heard of it.
Sherry recommends it, so I buy a small pot of it.

Next is the green grocer.
I buy lemons and ask Sherry something.

“Fruits that look like this, isn’t there a sweet one?”
“Gamu. It’s hard to get because it isn’t in season at the moment. It’s normally produced during the winter.”

There’s no chance in summer?
It might be like a mandarin if it can be gotten during winter.
Oh.
What is the season for lemon?

“This is produced during the summer?”
“Now it is, though it used to be only available in the winter.”
“There are actually two kinds. The regular one that can be bought from autumn to winter, and this smaller one produced in the north that can be gotten during summer.”
“They last a reasonably long time, and because both are farmed you can get them most of the year without interruption.”
“I see.”

Sherry didn’t seem to know, but the green grocer told us about it.

“There aren’t many fruits this season. What about the kyupiko? There will be more variety again soon.”

The green grocer points out the fruit that looks like a carrot.
The kyupiko.
I’ll use the kyupiko for now, so I buy it and return home.

When we return to the house, I make some crepes.
One per person isn’t much, so I make two each.
Ten in total.
It’s tough.

Vesta tried to give me a hand cooking them as well.
Will you be able to do it next time?
I put the crepe in the frying pan with some sugar and liqueur, along with slices of the kyupiko.
The charcoal stove is prepared, and the frying pan is put over it.

“Umm. Is it the one made in the experiment the other day?”
“We’ll enjoy it after dinner.”

I replied with a smile to Roxanne.

“It was very delicious, and I liked it.”

There’s a chance of failing it.
But it should be fine.

“Vesta, please fire it up.”
“Okay.”

During dinner, Vesta started the fire.

“Is it alright to use fire made by someone from the dragon tribe for food?”
“It’s never sustained to warm the food right up, and I haven’t heard of it being harmful.”
“Can you ignite liquor?”
“Yes. I don’t think there is any problem if I blow fire on it for a bit.”

It seems to be alright.
This will be good.

Near the end of dinner, we warm the crepes up.
Vesta watches me spoon something into the frying pan, then I pass the handle to her.

“Good. Vesta, can you add some fire to the frying pan?”

I asked when I had finished preparing.
Vesta breathed a little fire.
The fire danced around the frying pan for a little.
The flames rolled around, then changed colour from yellow to blue, and then disappeared.

It’s a flambe.
I wanted to try doing it once.

“Oh? What happened?”
“Did you ignite the liquor?”
“Amazing, desu.”
“Is this alright?”

It seems I’ve stimulated everyone’s mind with childlike wonder.
The Queen of the desserts, Crepe suzette.
Watching a chef prepare this in a french restaurant stimulates everyone’s mind with childlike wonder.
After I saw it on television when I was a child, I really wanted it.

“It’s alright.”

The crepe suzette is taken from the frying pan, and divided amongst everyone’s plates.
I prepared some brown sauce too.
I made caramel while I was testing the alcohol on the fire.

The kyupiko was a bit brown, but there shouldn’t be any problem if I think about pineapple in sweet & sour pork.
Even though it looks like a carrot.

I moved it to the plates, distributing it in order.
I put it in front of Roxanne, next to me.

“Thank you.”
“Everyone enjoy it.”
“Okay.”

After distributing it to everyone, I cut the crepe and bring it to my mouth.
It’s warm.
It’s also smooth and soft.
It has a gentle texture.

Not just the texture, but the taste is quite wonderful.
It’s delicious.
A slight bitterness, with caramel sauce.

“After all, crepe is meant to be warm.”
“This is amazing. Crepe? I’ve never heard of it. As expected of Master.”
“I haven’t heard of it either. Such a soft and gentle taste.”
“Crepe, desu.”

Even though it isn’t fish, she seems to have tried to remember it.

“This is amazing. To make something so delicious is incredible. To eat so many delicious things is wonderful.”

Vesta also stuffs her mouth with great wonder.
She seems to have liked it.

I’ll have them fully express how much they liked it.
It will be Sex Maniac’s turn after dinner.
Even though there are four of them, with Sex Maniac it isn’t a big deal.
With Sex Maniac, it will be alright.

Maybe I should level up Sex Maniac after Swordsman.
No. There’s no big reason for it.
Well, this is the only reason.

The [Increased Vigor] skill from Sex Maniac is probably level dependent.
I’m not having any problems with the current level, so that’s not a reason.

I can handle four people, but how much is possible?
What are the limits?
It would be good to know in advance.
I should raise Sex Maniac’s level before I find out.

Swordsman will probably be Lv30 soon.
It’s not useful when Durandal isn’t out.
I’m still increasing it’s experience twenty times faster than normal though.

When you hit Lv30, there’s a vast increase to get to Lv31.
There’s another wall getting from Lv40 to Lv41.
Every ten levels things seem to get more difficult.

Most jobs branch out at Lv30 though, so that isn't too hard.

The next day, even though Swordsman hit Lv30, there was no new job.
It's possible there are conditions for it.
Even Assassin didn't appear when Warrior hit Lv30 unless you've defeated a demon with poison.

Now that Swordsman has been increased, I'll do Sex Maniac next.
There's no real meaning to leveling up Sex Maniac.
The mental suffering to leveling it might be rough.
However, there is no real trouble. Sex Maniac reaches Lv30 after a few days.

There was a message that a successful bid was made on a Green Caterpillar's monster card, so I received it from Luke and made a sacrificial misanga.
We now have a spare sacrificial misanga.
It might be good to fuse the Green Caterpillar's monster card to accessories other than the misanga.

The sacrificial skill is a disposable skill.
Having an item with it on there is a waste of space.
It's not expected to have it on a defensive item.

Until now, we've never broken a sacrificial misanga.
If we fight carefully, it's not likely that we'll break one often.

Also, even Sex Maniac didn't have a following job.
Maybe racial jobs don't have another job derived from them?
Next I'll level up merchant.

I know that merchant has a job derived from it.
It's slave trader.
Merchant also seems to have wealthy merchant, so slave trader is an alternate job.

Chapter 139 - Jobless

Next morning. By the time we finished exploration, my Merchant job had reached Lv30.
As I conjectured, I have acquired Slave Merchant Lv1.
It's confirmed now that it requires Merchant Lv30.

Earlier, there was an especial significance of leveling up Sex Maniac. Because it is still too early, however, I can't say anything in that regard.
Honestly, Slave Merchant's effects and skills are not to the extent to be able to be called special.

For some reason, I have acquired one more job.
There seem to be more derivative jobs of Merchant.
It's called Jobless.

Jobless Lv1
Effects | Empty
Skills | Effect Settings | Skill Settings | Empty

I don't get how Jobless can be a derivative job of Merchant.
There are empty effect and skill slots present. Are the effect and skill slots empty because their settings haven't been configured yet?
They seem to be same as empty skill slots on equipment.

Jobless seems to be able to set an effect and a skill.
There are two skills – Effect Settings and Skill Settings – so I can set it myself, I believe.
It seems to be a really interesting job.

"On that subject, Sherry, do you know about a job called Jobless?"

After leaving the labyrinth in order to buy ingredients for breakfast, I ask Sherry while walking.
Sherry may know something.

"It's a job found only in legends. Not much details of that job are known."

It’s called Jobless, it can not be famous for money, can it?

“It’s not well known?”
“Long ago, there was someone who claimed they had that job. As for the details of the job, no one knows.”

It doesn’t seem to be well known.
It seems to be a rare job.

“That person, who claimed that they were Jobless, didn’t disclose any details?”
“They just spontaneously spread the word one day that they were Jobless.”
“It sounds like a useless job.”

What kind of a man would declare himself that he’s jobless?

“I have heard something in this regard. Wasn’t Crown Prince Jobless, too?”

Roxanne seems to know something.
As expected of the world renowned Toyama Sakura. (TN: I have no idea in what context the author said this)
He’s crown prince, not shogun?

“Crown Prince?”
“That’s right, Crown Prince. He has been disinherited, however. He is said to be the worst crown prince in the successive generations. He’s a man with no patience. He quits one job and takes another, and keeps doing it over and over again. Furthermore, lying is his forte. He’s a true good-for-nothing. An imperial good-for-nothing.”

That’s harsh.
Oh well, he’s a NEET crown prince, after all.
It’s better to keep Jobless concealed from the world.

“Words of such a person can’t be taken seriously.”

O-O-O-Oh
I shut my mouth up and listen quietly.
Crown Prince must have had his own reasons.
That’s probably why he took various jobs.

I was of the idea that Jobless is a derivative job of Merchant but it doesn't seem to be the case.
It's probably acquired by acquiring different jobs.
When I acquired Slave Merchant, I must have reached the requisite number.

There's no relationship between Merchant and Jobless.
It is just a coincidence that I acquired it after my Merchant job reached Lv30.
Is Jobless by any chance the last job?
That's not possible for I haven't acquired Adventurer and Priest yet.

Is there an upper limit in respect of the number of jobs one can possess?
There's no such thing, probably, so I don't need to be worried too much.
My worries are unfounded.
They have to be unfounded.

To relieve my anxiety, I switch my sixth job to Jobless.
I invoke Effect Settings.
A long list of job effects floats up inside my head. I was of the idea that I would have to choose one from the effects of Jobless. However, I can choose from the effects of other jobs, too, it seems.
Interesting.

Because there are Explorer, Hero, Wizard and Monk in the list, it seems to allow you to choose one from the effects of the jobs you possess.
If you could select the strongest effect and skill of the strongest job via Effect and Skill Settings, Jobless would be the strongest job.

You can choose an effect only from the jobs you possess.
In a way, you won't be jobless anymore.
In other words, the more the jobs one has, the stronger Jobless becomes.

As the effect of Jobless, I select the most powerful, Hero's Medium Increase in Intelligence.
With Increase in Intelligence, my magic attack power will increase, too.

Jobless Lv1
Effects | Medium Increase in Intelligence
Skills | Effect Settings | Skill Settings | Empty

It's configurable, indeed.
It's a pity, though, that I can set only one.
If it weren't limited to one, it would be better than Hero.

Hero has eight job effects. Allow me to choose three, at least.
If it could allow three or four effects and skills, it would be best for someone like Roxanne who can use no more than one job.

Even if I could select two effects, it would be better. I would choose two Medium Increase in Intelligence effects.
If there were two empty slots, would it let me choose two Medium Increase in Intelligence effects?
If not, would it let me choose one Medium Increase in Intelligence and one Small Increase in Intelligence?
Vesta's Dragon Knight has one Medium Increase in Endurance, one Small Increase in Endurance and one Minute Increase in Endurance.

Oh well, there's no use in talking about 'ifs'.
In my case, since I can use multiple jobs, there has to be a mechanism to use multiple jobs.

Next, I try to set the skill.
I choose Item Box skill of Explorer.
While buying food ingredients, I open Item Box to confirm it.

Item box has gained only one new column beside the previously available 44 columns.
Because Jobless was acquired just now, the Item Box of Jobless could only add one column
Since Jobless is only Lv1, the capacity of its Item Box is merely 1×1.
It's same as when I acquired Explorer.

Just because I chose the Item Box of Explorer Lv44 doesn't mean that its capacity would be 44×44.
The level of the skill seems to depend on the level of the job.

Is it perhaps same in case of effect, too?

Even though I chose Medium Increase in Intelligence effect of Hero Lv41, the degree of increment will be that of Jobless Lv1.
It's a shame.

Nah, because you don't need to level up both the jobs, isn't it great?
If you had to level up both Jobless and the job which the skill was borrowed from, wouldn't that be terrible?
Not for me, though, for I can use multiple jobs.

What will happen if I choose Cook's Item Box skill?
Will it be 30 columns like Cook's?
Let's try.

I invoke Skill Settings to choose a job… I can't.

Eh?
Don't tell me.
Can a skill be set only once?

No way!
Let's try again.
Just as I feared, I can't.
The skill seems to be able to be set only once.

Gahn!
I was careless.
I have made a blunder.

I chose such a petty skill as Item Box.
Oh well, it'll be of some use when it reaches Lv99.

"Err, let's return quickly and eat something."

If it's a one-use only skill, mention it!
Skill Settings is a one-use only skill, huh?
Or is there such a thing as skill setting rights?

Nope. You can't rewrite a skill in the skill slot of an equipment. It must be same in this case, too.
It was imprudent of me to think that it was possible.
At the very least, because I chose Medium Increase in Intelligence effect, I have saved some face.

Jobless seems to be able to choose one skill and one effect from the available jobs only once.
To be able to choose a skill and an effect from different jobs, it's fitting for a job that's acquired by acquiring numerous jobs.
But it's one-use only.

If that's the case, then there's a weight in the theory that Jobless is the last job.
If Jobless is the last job, then you don't have to be concerned about the jobs that you may acquire later on when choosing the skill and the effect from the jobs that you already possess.
I have made a blunder.

I prepare breakfast to distract myself.
It's not delicious. It must be the first time after coming to this world.
Haa

Now that I think about it, is Effect Settings a one-use only skill, too?
When I think about it, the meal becomes even less delicious.
After having breakfast, I try to invoke Effect Settings.

I can choose.
Effect Settings doesn't seem to be a one-use only skill.
How many times can Effect Settings be used then?

Twice, perhaps?
I wonder.
I try to choose Small Increase in Endurance effect of Explorer.
I have already chosen such a petty skill as Item Box, so it doesn't matter anymore.

Jobless Lv1
Effects | Small Increase in Endurance
Skills | Effect Settings | Skill Settings | Item Box

Apparently, you can choose both the skill and the effect of the same job.
In that case, because I already have Explorer, which is obviously better, I don't need this one.
Can I turn the effect back to Medium Increase in Intelligence?
I try to invoke Effect Settings and choose a job… I can't.

Eh?
Two-use only, really?
I try again, flustered. I can't.
No way!

No, wait.
Reuse time?
It suddenly occurs to me, so I try to invoke Skill Settings again.
I can choose now.

What a relief.
After using Effect Settings and Skill settings once, I seem to need to wait before using them again.
They're not one-use or two-use only skills.

If I think about it, Skill Settings didn't disappear after using it once.
Now I get why.

Reuse time, huh?
I see.
Exactly how long is the cooldown period, though?
Last I used it was before buying food ingredients. From then till now, how much time has passed? About an hour, maybe?

Which means that I can't use it frequently.
There's no need to change the effect every time.
Nope. When using Durandal, I'll have to change it to Medium Increase in Strength. When using magic, I'll have to change it back to Medium Increase in Intelligence.
Isn't it?

As the skill of Jobless, I choose Basic Fire Magic of Wizard.
Currently, it's not possible for me to cast two fire spells simultaneously.
However, isn't it so because they belong to the same job?
Right after casting a spell, it is possible to cast Heal (of Monk). It is also possible to open Item Box (of Explorer) and invoke Crude Medicine Concoction (of Herbalist).

Furthermore, bonus spells can be used right after, too.
Even if I can't use multiple spells of Wizard simultaneously, I may be

able to simultaneously use spells of Wizard and Jobless.
I better try it.

“Laundry is done.”
“Alright then, let’s go to Haruba’s 21st floor right away.”
“Okay.”

When Roxanne was done with laundry, we move to Haruba’s 21st floor.
We further the exploration and encounter a group of three Rtoll Trolls and a Rub Shrub.
This is convenient.

I cast first Firestorm.
Followed immediately by another one.
Sparks fly about.
And engulf the monsters.

Oops
I have no way of knowing if the second one succeeded or not.
After the flames die out, I cast third Firestorm.
If the last one didn’t succeed, this one would be second.

The sparks flutter and engulf the monsters. When the sparks start to fade, I cast fourth Firestorm.
The sparks flare up and engulf the monsters again.
Success!
I have succeeded in casting spells simultaneously.

It’s good to have succeeded and all but this time, I don’t know when to cast the next spell.
Before the flames of the fourth spell die out, the next spell in the third’s place should become available.
Whatever, I’ll just keep on casting Firestorm.
My body will know when the next spell will be available for use.

I cast fifth Firestorm.
The sparks flare up again, indicating that it succeeded.
As for the sixth spell, I can’t cast it simultaneously.
I’m glad that they didn’t move.

After a while, I cast again.
Before I could cast the seventh, however; the monsters, ablaze, try to attack.
Because they're ablaze, is that why their speed is relatively slower?
It can't vary to this extent, can it?

Roxanne dodges the Rtoll Troll's attack.
After the seventh spell, it's time to cast the eighth.
Miria thrusts her Estoc of Petrifaction into the Rub Shrub.
I cast ninth Firestorm.

The monsters keep burning. Before I could cast the tenth spell, however, the monsters collapse.
Critical must have proc'd in that while.
Roxanne looks at me with a surprised look about her face.

"This was a sort of an experiment. Okay?"
"Okay. The duration of the battle was considerably shorter."

It should roughly be half.
The time required to attack the monsters again after attacking them once has decreased significantly.
Let's suppose that I could take the Rtoll Trolls out in ten fire spells. This time, it wasn't until seventh spell that the vanguards had to confront the monsters. Earlier, it would be four spells before the vanguards would be called into action but this time, it was about twice of that, six spells.
Because two spells then are essentially four now, the time the vanguards are supposed to confront the monsters will be considerably shorter.

"The sparks were flashier than before. Magic- no, did you change the way you use magic?"

Sherry shares her impression.
That's it, more or less.
As you would expect.
Because the sparks kept dancing constantly during the battle, they looked flashier, surely.

"Were they? Well, to put it simply, I can use multiple fire spells

simultaneously. I'm doing this experiment in relation to that. The test will continue for a short while. From now, this will be my main style of fighting."
"You can do even such a thing? As expected of Master."
"But umm, such a thing is impossible, isn't it?"

Sherry is at a loss.
It's impossible, huh?
Well, it obviously is.

"Amazing, desu."
"You can do even such a thing?"

Miria and Vesta are totally under Roxanne's spell.

Normally, you can't use two Wizard jobs.
The man of the world, Gozer, is a grand wizard. Even he can't use both Wizard and Grand Wizard at the same time.
I, however, can use Wizard, Grand Wizard and Jobless. Triple jobs, that is.

Three simultaneous magic attacks, I would call it Jet Stream Attack.
I look forward to the future.

Chapter 140 - Continuous attack

“Since I don’t need an incantation, I might be able to use magic continuously.”

I told this to Roxanne and Sherry so they weren’t confused.
[Incantation Omission] isn’t really a requirement for it.
Multiple jobs is the important part for continuous magic.

“Can you fire as often as you like since you don’t have an incantation?”
“Well, I can’t do that much…”

Sherry exchanged a glance with Roxanne.
She’s thinking something.

“Is something wrong?”
“Normally you’ll call out to each other when you’re about to use skills or magic in a party..”
“We don’t have a problem in our party since only Master uses magic, but incantations don’t work well when two or more people use them because of what they call an Incantation Resonance.” TN: BAM, all your dreams of 6 Wizard parties are gone.

Sherry follows up Roxanne’s explanation.
So Incantations can’t overlap?
Then it would be difficult to have continuous magic.

When Roxanne mentions it, it seems to be something everyone knows about.
It’s the first time I’ve heard of it.

“Is that so. Did everyone know that?”
“I know, desu.”
“I think I’ve also heard it.”

Miria sticks out her chest proudly when I ask her.
Vesta seems to already know as well.

“Because of Incantation Resonance, there are no times where two or more parties will cooperate in exploring the labyrinth. There aren’t many instances of multiple Wizards in a party either, but when there are they alternate shooting magic.”
“Hmmm. As expected of Sherry.”

I was thinking that three wizards in the rear would make a considerably strong party, but I hadn’t seen one so far.
So there was another reason, aside from just the rarity of Wizards?
Two or more people can’t chant an incantation at the same time.
They might need to alternate because of MP problems as well.

“For people who enter the labyrinth, this is common sense.”
“I see. So magic can’t be used continuously because the incantations interfere with each other, well, that doesn’t really matter to me.”

I look away from Sherry, and let her think about it on her own.

“As expected of Master.”

Roxanne welcomes it.
It’s comforting.
Yes. I want to call you the soul mate of my heart.

“It’s still at the experimental stage, so I’ll continue testing it a bit more.”

I kept testing Jobless.
The next demons are two Rtoll Troll’s.
This is no problem.
I use double [Fire storm].

After the ninth shot, I focused on their appearance.
Since they weren’t defeated, I used a tenth shot.
The Rtoll Trolls burnt again and became smoke.

Since I don’t know when critical’s happen, it’s hard to judge the end.
If critical’s happen, I don’t need the tenth shot.
MP is consumed, even if I use the attack magic when there is no demon.
I should use it after confirming if the demon is defeated or not.

The demon could be defeated by the sixth or seventh shot if there is a large amount of criticals.
I can't plan for that though.
It would be extremely rare if the demon was defeated after the seventh.

The next group had a Hat Bat and three Rtoll Troll's.
It's the first time fighting a Hat Bat with Jobless.
I can't change the skill in Jobless often.
The only thing I can do is use fire magic for it against the Hat Bat.

It's a problem that I can only set one skill.
I'm not asking for four, but at least two would be nice.
If I had two, I can set one to the demon from the current level's weakness, and one to the demon on the previous level's weakness.
At least the Hat Bat doesn't have a resistance to fire magic.

I repeatedly use the double [Fire Storm] again.
Should I have done something else?
Was there something?
No. I think this was the least troublesome for now.

Jobless can only keep using fire magic after the Rtoll Trolls are defeated.
Water magic could defeat the Hat Bat quicker.
Since there are three Rtoll Trolls, defeating them as my priority is fine this time.

What should I do for the ninth shot?
There's the possibility that a critical will happen.
If there is a critical by the ninth shot, then the ninth and tenth spell don't both have to be fire magic.
Jobless can only shoot fire magic though.

Can I plan for if it's the fire magic of wizard, or the fire magic of jobless that is used first?
I'll have to test it.

I try to use [Water Storm] as the ninth.
I continue by using [Fire Storm] for the tenth.
Both fog and sparks dance in the surrounding area.

It’s good that I can use both.

Jobless isn’t set to water magic, so the water magic is from wizard.
It seems to have gone well.
Demons are in boiling water hell because of water and fire.
The Rtoll Trolls fall from the boiling water hell.

Did a critical appear?
If I think about the Rtoll Trolls falling on the ninth spell, should I make the tenth a single target attack spell?
The difference in MP consumption would be useful.

Should I have made the fifth and seventh shots [Water Storm] as well?
If there are Hat Bat’s and Rtoll Trolls, alternately using Wind & Fire magic would finish the fight the quickest.
The fight becomes easier when the number of demons decreases, so should I prioritize cutting down the number of demons?
The number of demons was probably the best priority this time since there were three Rtoll Trolls, but what about if the different demons have equal numbers?

What about if there are two Hat Bat’s and one Rtoll Troll?
Jobless can only use fire magic, so defeating the Hat Bat’s quicker wouldn’t work.
Is it impossible?

Jobless can only use fire magic.
If I alternate water and fire, then the Rtoll Troll will be defeated at the same time as the Hat Bat’s.
Should I defeat the lone Rtoll Troll quicker just to cut down the numbers?
I’m thinking about various things.

I use [Breeze ball] on the remaining Hat Bat.
I follow up with a successive [Fire Ball] as the 12th spell.
Ooops. The [Fire Ball] hovers over my head.

The [Breeze Ball] and [Fire Ball] seem to be interfering with each other.
Is this the interference resonance?

As the flame wavered around, I watched the Hat Bat.
Will things be alright?

Maybe some things have a synergy effect.
Could fire magic and earth magic make lava hell?
That would be nice.

In that case, what would happen to resistances and weaknesses?
If there is a resistance to water or fire, can boiling water hell be resisted?
That would be bad.

It's hard to understand, and getting more complex.
I need to simplify it.
I should pause the attack magic and shoot separately.
I won't know which shot will defeat it because of criticals.

If I assume that there are no criticals, when will it be defeated?
Annoying.
I alternately use [Breeze ball] and [Fire ball].

The bat shakes in the wind, and is knocked around by the fire ball's continuously.
With another [Breeze ball], the Hat Bat crashes down.
That's it?
Using them separately seems to be the correct answer.

"You can continuously use the single target attack magic."
"It's a bit troublesome."

I can probably use the fire magic continuously.
I appreciate Sherry thinking about it.

The next fight is two Hat Bat's and an Rtoll Troll.
Crap. I'm not sure what to do yet.
I use [Water Storm] on instinct.

Oh.
Since there are two Hat Bat's, I reflexively used water magic like I always have.
Is it alright to use the water magic?
I use the fire magic second.

It’s probably good.
There are three demons, so the three vanguards are in one vs one’s.
There won’t be much advantage if only one is defeated early.

The combat is longer if I delay fighting the Hat Bat’s, so the disadvantage increases.
What should I do? I don’t understand it well.

“I did it, desu.”

In addition, there is that as well.
Rtoll Troll was petrified.

Even if I come to the conclusion that I should focus on the Rtoll Troll first, it might all come to nothing.
It’s useless to think about it.
Best guess is alright.
Let’s go with that.

I alternately use [Fire Storm] and [Water Storm].
Rtoll Troll becomes smoke first.
You become weak to magic when petrified, so being defeated first is normal.
Eventually the Hat Bat’s fall too.

Were there any criticals?
I’m not sure. Let’s give up on thinking too deeply about it.

I stop thinking about it, and just fight for a while.
It’s good.
I only experiment a little.
When the Hat Bat comes out, I use [Fire Storm] first, then try to use [Water Storm].

There is no fog, even though there are sparks.
The water magic doesn’t seem to have happened.
When I try to use [Fire Storm] instead the sparks flare up.
It’s a success.

Wizards fire magic must have been the first fire magic.
When I tried to use [Water Storm], Jobless does not have water magic, so it didn’t work since Wizard was already using fire.

Then when I tried to use [Fire Storm] instead, it worked since Jobless has fire magic.

Following that, water magic worked, so it's certain that the first fire magic was from wizard.
Is the order of magic decided by the order of jobs?

After the combat ends, I make Jobless the third job, and wizard the sixth job.
The next group is a combination of Rub Shrub and Rtoll Troll, so I defeat them using just fire magic. The next group after that has a Hat Bat, so I use water magic.
I also use the fire magic, and the fog and sparks appear as expected.

The order of water followed by fire, went well.
But, there is no water in Jobless.
The wizards magic went first, then jobless's magic which had been skipped went second.

It's logical.
It goes in the order of the jobs.
Wizard came before Jobless because I didn't use magic that Jobless had first.

I continue hunting demons without thinking much more about it.
There might still be some room for improvement in the order, but I'm not sure.
I return the effect of Jobless to the increased intellect effect from Hero.
It's probably not very effective at the moment since the jobs level is low.

It's great to be able to use two magic jobs.
It speeds up our exploration as well.
There might not be any formidable enemies on this floor anymore.
We still need to be careful though.

As I become more familiar with Jobless, we find the boss room of the 21st floor.
There is a small room with only an entry door and an exit door.

The waiting room.

“It’s the waiting room?”
“Yes, desu.”

Miria is motivated.
Ma Bream will appear on the 22nd floor.

I prepare Durandal, and remove Jobless.
Warrior is used instead of Jobless.
I don’t need to use Swordsman anymore since I got it up to Lv30.
I could change Jobless’s skill to [Rush], but the cooldown probably wouldn’t be over to allow me to switch it back by the time we defeated the boss.

Now that I can use double magic, after this I’ll probably spend even more fights using magic instead of Durandal.
What should I do?
Should I even use magic in boss fights?

It’s not a good idea to change my fighting style suddenly.
I’ll use Durandal this time.
The opponent is a boss after all.

I’ll fight against the boss on the 22nd floor many times.
I’ll try fighting with magic once there.
Or, should I be more careful and start from a lower floor?

The door to the boss room opened, and I entered with Durandal.
Smoke gathers, and two demons show up.
Rtoll Troll, and Roll Troll.
Vesta charges the Rtoll Troll, and the other three take on the boss.

After using [Abnormal resistance decrease] on the boss, I attack the Rtoll Troll.
Safely from the side, I attack the Rtoll Troll, and then the boss until they are defeated.
There was no petrification this time, but it was almost peaceful attacking the boss from behind.

I’m just stationary artillery.
Aside from Roxanne, Vesta can fight a demon well too.

Fighting the boss and the other demon is a constant fight right from the start.
Unlike fighting in the caves of the labyrinth, where there is a small wait before coming into contact with the demons.

I'll have to think about it when we get to the 22nd floor boss room.
For now it's enough just to have set foot on the 22nd floor.

"The demon on the 22nd floor is Ma Bream?"
"Yes. The demon on Haruba's 22nd floor is Ma Bream."

I confirm it with Sherry.
It's Ma Bream.

Now using Cook is a problem.
Explorer, Hero, Wizard, Monk, Gambler, and Jobless are my six jobs, and it's still not enough?
People become useless quickly when they get accustomed to their luxuries.

Chapter 141 - The Way to the Waterfall

“We will go to Quratar’s labyrinth tomorrow morning. Today, we will continue with Haruba’s 22nd floor. I will be relying on you, Roxanne.”
“Understood.”

We move to 22nd floor.
I decide to fight without using Cook.
If I kill a large number, I should be able to stock whole fish.

I choose Basic Earth Magic of Wizard as the skill of Jobless.
For Haruba’s 22nd floor, it is good to use earth magic as it is the attribute Ma Bream’s weak against.
And I can use earth magic against Hat Bat as well.

But despite that, my first encounter on 22nd floor is two Rtoll Trolls.
That’s troublesome.
I cast [Firestorm] when they enter my line of sight, followed by [Sandstorm].
The sparks and sand dance together.

Even though I cast sand and fire spells this time, it didn’t look like there was an interference between the two area of effect magic attacks.
I guess it is fine to push the monsters down with lava hell.

But the sand is not melting, so I guess it is sand bath, not lava hell.
It must feel good, I guess.
But Isn’t that actually bad?

Casting spells continuously, I take out the Rtoll Trolls.
It fell down even with the sand bath.
So I guess it must not have felt good.

“……”

Sherry looks toward me suspiciously.

The reason being, I used earth magic against the Rtoll Trolls.
Which reminds me, didn't I mention earlier that I was able to cast continuous fire spells?

"It was fire magic on 21st floor but on Haruba's 22nd floor, it is better to use earth magic continuously."
"I see, it was like that, huh? So you can do even something like that."

Sherry buys my explanation and nods her head admiringly.
Even though I felt like I missed with my first explanation, it turned out fine in the end.

"As expected of Master."

As far as Roxanne is concerned, I don't need to explain anything.

"Amazing, desu."
"So that's what it was?"

And these two are under Roxanne's influence.
I am not sure if they even understood what I just explained.

I greet the next group of one Ma Bream and two Rtoll Trolls with continuous earth and fire spells.
I am not sure if it is a good thing to take out Ma Breams first by using continuous earth magic. However, since I am not sure if it is good thing, I decide not to worry about it too much.
Thinking about too many things will eventually cause me to freeze.
The spells engulf the monsters.

"It's coming."

Ge. Ma Bream shoots water back to return the favor.
Should I have taken it out first, after all?
Well, I would probably not have been able to finish it off that quick anyway.

Roxanne dodges it precisely.
The water shot flies by my side.
It is I, not Roxanne, who is in the rear, that needs to be careful behind her.

I cast spells while waiting for the monsters.
Two Rtoll Trolls move in front.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“Vesta and I will handle the Rtoll Trolls. Miria, take care of the right.”
“Okay.”
“Understood.”

After Miria asks something, Roxanne gives instructions to organize the vanguard formation.
Roxanne and Vesta are dealing with the Rtoll Trolls.
Miria is dealing with the Ma Bream that arrived late for it was using water magic.

Even if Ma bream became stone, it would not be possible for me to take out the Rtoll Trolls first because I can only use earth magic using Jobless.
But on the other hand, since there are two Rtoll Trolls, it would not matter if one of them were petrified.
In short, it doesn’t matter what happens to the monster that Miria is fighting.

In the end, there was no petrifaction this time. I knocked all the three of them using magic.
The three of them died at the same time since I used earth magic, which is Ma Bream’s weakness, and fire magic, which is Rtoll Troll’s weakness, at the same time.
Because it has now reached a point where I can cast spells continuously, the duration of battles has become shorter, so there is even less chance for petrifaction to proc.
There is no helping it.

“White, desu.”

Miria brought the drop item white fish.
Because I don’t have Cook selected, the drop rate of whole fish will be less.
There is no helping this one as well.

Miria seems happy even with the white fish.
Not being accustomed to luxury is good.

I will have you eat white fish tempura till you die.

“Because it took so much effort to find Ma Bream on this floor, how about we be content with the white fish for today’s dinner?”
“Yes, desu.”
“We will be having whole fish, too, of course. As for the whole fish, how about the day after tomorrow?”
“Ooh. Yes, desu.”

With this, she will probably not be disappointed when the drop rate of whole fish is low.
We explored until evening. Whole fish was dropped on more than two occassions.
As I thought, even without Cook, I would get a few after killing a large number.

I will stop by the Imperial Capital on the way to pick up the clothes.
Today is the day when the maid outfit was supposed to be ready.
I warp us to the adventurers’ guild in the Imperial Capital and head to the clothing shop.

“Welcome back. The clothes are ready, please wait a minute.”

The shop clerk immediately receives us when we enter the shop.
Last time, I wasn’t given any such thing as a receipt.
It seems they remember their customers.
Can this be expected of a high-class shop in the Capital?

I move forward to the counter.
When the shop clerk heads inside, I manage to steal a peak. There’s a number of clothes inside.
All these clothes are custom-made. Does the shop clerk remembers what every single customer ordered?

I respect him.
It is impossible for me, at least.
There must be a register somewhere, though.

The shop clerk comes back with one set of clothes.
Since it looks like a maid outfit, I don’t think there’s any mistake.

Huh?

Inside, there's something similar to Uchikake. (TL: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kimono#Uchikake)
There is also a matching white dress for that Uchikake.

It's strangely Japanese.
It looks like a white kimono.
Is it really possible for this world to have something like this?

No, is it a gown?
It might be something similar to a bathrobe.
It is not exactly a Furisode either. (TN: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Furisode)

"Is that a gown?"
"Does it look like that?"

I ask, pointing my finger to it, but Roxanne doesn't know either.

"Umm, that's…"
"Oh, do you know what it is, Sherry?"

Sherry seems to know about it.
As expected of Sherry.

"This outfit is lent to the people who apply to the priests' guild to become shrine maiden. Do you want to have a shrine maiden outfit arranged?"

It's a shrine maiden's clothing?
No wonder it looks Japanese.
So it's that, huh?

"A daughter of certain family plans to become a shrine maiden so they asked for one."

The shop clerk explains after he brings the maid outfit.
Is it a tradition of shrine maidens?
Which reminds me, Sherry tried to become a shrine maiden, too.
She didn't have sufficient level to acquire Shrine Maiden job. It must not be a pleasant memory, I believe.

"So it's like that, huh?"

“If you order it from our shop, we will use silk to make it soft and comfortable. Also, we will make the clothes to be perfect fit for the person. In the training to become a priest or shrine maiden, one needs to meditate under the waterfall. Beside being fashionable, it’s functional as well; a lot of people order it. So, what about you?”
“If I get the opportunity, I guess.”

To acquire Shrine Maiden job, I need to perform waterfall meditation.
Do I need to be in white clothes to perform waterfall meditation?
Am I supposed to wear before entering the basin under the waterfall?

It is white, made from silk, so it’s probably not that thick.
What would happen if I were under the water, wearing thin white clothes?
……’It’ will.

“In the guild, the ascetic training is conducted at the waterfall separately for males and females. As long as the lower half of your body is properly covered, there will be no problem.”

The shop clerk tells me quietly.
Are you a psychic?
This clerk, he’s good.

“I’ll be visiting again soon.”
“We will be waiting for you.”

I receive the maid outfit and leave the shop.
Since I have received the clothes, I temporarily return home.
I warp us to home from the Imperial Capital’s Adventurers’ Guild.

“Then I will change my clothes.”

When we get back home, Roxanne starts taking her clothes off immediately.
Wait, wait, wait!
Calm down, Roxanne.

Because I know that Roxanne’s magnificent things will pop out if she removes her clothes.
We are yet to buy the ingredients for dinner.

I remember that last time, I greedily savored their taste immediately after they got their maid outfits.
I am the one who is at fault.

“Not now, after the dinner. It will be better to wash our bodies first.”
“Is that so?”

Somehow, I managed to calm myself down and went out to buy ingredients for dinner.
Afterwards, we had the dinner.
We had tempura tonight. I let Miria eat her fill of white fish.

I have been relatively reserved these past days but it will become hot from now on.
I don’t want to make tempura on hot days.
It might be our last tempura this season.

“To acquire Shrine Maiden we need to perform ascetic training at the waterfall, right? Would any waterfall do?”

I ask Sherry while eating.
Even though she may hate recalling it,
I can’t help it.
It is necessary.

“Although the location is determined by the guild, I didn’t hear anything regarding specific waterfall or conditions.”
“Really? But the problem is the location of the waterfall.”
“Are you going to perform waterfall meditation?”
“I guess.”

I’ll have to do it sooner or later if I am to acquire it.
Especially, after having seen that outfit.
Nope, acquiring the job is important, too.

“Know, desu.”

Miria seem to know where it is.
Eating, and eating, and still eating white fish.

“Does Miria know where the waterfall is?”
“Fishing, desu.”

She probably caught fish in the basin under the waterfall at some point.
As expected of the big fish lover.
Eating, and eating, and still eating white fish.

“Did Miria chance upon the waterfall when she caught fish?”
“The other day the first time, desu.”

I can’t get this code language.
When was this ‘other day’.

“xxxxxxxxxx”
“xxxxxxxxxx”
“It was the other day when we had a day off. She heard someone talking about a waterfall in the vicinity.”
“Yes, desu.”

Roxanne translates after talking to Miria.
By fishing, did she mean fishing that time?
It was when I brought Vesta home.

“Is there a waterfall near that coast?”
“There seems to be a waterfall which the guild used as ascetic training ground until a while ago.”
“Freshwater, fishing, desu.”

I see.
So Miria collected information for that purpose, huh?
Considering the result, it turned out well, somehow.
Eating, and eating, and still eating white fish.

“It should be fine, especially, since it was used as ascetic training ground before. But the problem is, why is it no longer being used.”
“Dangerous, desu.”
“I guess it is no longer in use because monsters might have appeared. It is a common occurence.”

Sherry comments this time.
Monsters start appearing in the vicinity if a labyrinth emerges.
It will, of course, not be used if it gets dangerous.

In this world, there seem to be a lot of dangerous things.

It seems to be common.
Since it's us, taking a little risk shouldn't be a problem, right?

"It seems usable then. But without seeing it once, I will not be sure."
"See, desu."

We are not going for fishing, though.
I guess it will be fine.
Miria picks up another white fish tempura.

Eating, and eating, and still eating white fish.
Is she from Edo?
She's the rebirth of Kanda.

During the dinner I enjoyed tempura; after the dinner, I'll enjoy their outfits.
Eating, and eating.
By the way, Vesta has put on her maid outfit, too. I carry them to the bedroom one by one.
Just when I was thinking as to why they are not changing in the bedroom, it turned out like this.

Is this the reason why Roxanne suddenly took her clothes off earlier in the living room?
Without having any particularly displeased expression about my face, without showing the thrill inside my heart, I carry all of them to the bedroom.
I embrace Vesta in both my hands, carrying her without any trouble.
It is because I train hard everyday in the labyrinth.

I don't mean she is heavy or anything.
It did not cause any pain in my back.
My back is perfectly fine even now.
I train myself everyday, after all. (TN: Yeah, as if casting spells will build your strength)

In the morning, after grabbing the map of Quratar's labyrinth, we move to 21st floor.
The monster native to 21st floor is Kettle Mermaid, the weakness of which is earth magic, so it's better to set it as the skill of Jobless.
Petrifaction didn't proc even after using Abnormal Status Resistance

Down but we took the boss out safely.

This makes it two consecutive boss battles where petrifaction didn't proc.
I wonder if I was simply lucky the first time.

"The monster native to Quratar's 22nd floor is Clamshell."
"Do we have any clams remaining? Let's try fighting once for now. After that, how about moving to Haruba? Roxanne, can you guide us to a place with Clamshells?"
"Certainly."

After fighting Clamshells once, I warp us to Haruba's labyrinth.
We have fought against Clamshells in Haruba's labyrinth already. Also, because I have confirmed the strength of the monsters on 22nd floor, there will be no problem.
For both Clamshells and Kettle Mermaids are weak against earth magic, Quratar's 22nd floor shouldn't prove difficult for us.

Chapter 142 - Earring

After having breakfast, we head to the Imperial Capital.
I warp us to the wall of the adventurers' guild and move out.

"I'll go the clothing shop and have the clothes, which we saw yesterday, tailored for you."
"Shrine maiden's?"

When I tell everyone, Roxanne responds as the representative of the rest.

Because Sherry already has Shrine Maiden job, she doesn't need one.
But I can't say out loud that Sherry will be the only one won't be getting one.

"It's alright. Sherry has already performed meditation under the waterfall. I'll have you teach us all about it."
"Y-Yes."

After I persuade her, we enter the shop.
The usual male shop clerk receives us.

"Welcome."
"I would like to have same shrine maiden clothes as yesterday tailored for these four here."
"Thank you very much. We already have their measurements but let us confirm just in case."
"Please."

The four of them were led inside.
They seem to keep personal information of every customer.
They must also have the three sizes of all the noble young ladies.
It's a treasure trove!

"We would need five days to have the clothes ready. Would that be okay?"
"I understand."

“Because the silk will be used as fabric, one outfit will cost 1,500 Nars. Since you’re having four outfits same as our recommendation yesterday tailored, we will give you a special, discounted price of 4,200 Nars.”

Is 1,500 high or low?
I don’t understand well.
My money sense is numb.
It being Nar, which I’m not accustomed to from the beginning, not Yen.

After placing the order for the clothes, we enter the labyrinth and kick the exploration off.
The exploration is progressing smoothly.
Nah, I can’t say for sure as we have yet to reach the boss room.
I casually advance.

After I acquired Jobless, because the casting speed has essentially doubled, the duration of battles has shortened significantly.
But it’s sometimes favorable and sometimes not.
It’s not something which I should be complaining about, though.
After the noon break, we enter the labyrinth in the afternoon.

“It’s about to be evening soon.”
“Alright, let’s return after an experiment.”

After Roxanne informs me of the time, I finish the exploration.
Because it takes time to reset the skill of Jobless, it’s not convenient to test it.
So I decided to test it at the end of the day.
Because it’s the last experiment of the day, even if I fiddle with the skill of Jobless, there won’t be any problem.

“Experiment? Is it related to the bath?”

Earlier, I told Roxanne that we would finish the exploration ahead of time to take bath.

“Well, yeah, it’s an experiment related to the bath.”
“Is it because you can now use it continuously?”

Sherry seems to have a vague idea of what the experiment is.

Because I can now use magic continuously, I can try it.
The time required to prepare the bath will be shorter.

“Bath, desu.”
“Yes, I look forward to it.”

Miria and Vesta are genuinely pleased.

After buying ingredients for dinner, we return home.
When we arrive at home, there was a note left at the entrance.
It’s from Luke the broker.

“Master, there’s a message from Mr. Luke. There seemed to be a successful bid of 5,500 Nars for a Goat Monster Card.”
“Oh, goat?”

With a Goat Monster Card, I can have 2x Intelligence skill attached.
Although things are going smooth as they are, there’s no harm in strengthening ourselves further.
Because the difficulty level of the monsters will jump up on the next, 23rd, floor; we have to become stronger.

“Increase in Intelligence, huh?”
“Say, it’s possible to have it fused with an accessory, right?”
“That’s right.”

I confirm with Sherry who was muttering to herself.
I can have 2x Intelligence skill attached to an accessory.
I wonder if it’s appropriate to attach it to an accessory or not.

It’s not currently a pressing problem for things are going smooth.
Because I already have a spare Sacrificial Misanga, I might as well try other accessories now.
Even if I attach 2x Intelligence skill to both a weapon and an accessory, I won’t be able to get 4x Intelligence — is what I have heard but who knows if it may work.
If attaching it to an accessory clicks, I can put the strategy of casting spells simultaneously with wielding Durandal to use.

“In any case, I’ll go receive it tomorrow. Ah, wait. Sherry, let’s go right away.”
“Okay.”

“I’ll be back in a bit.”
“Okay, please take care.”

I leave Roxanne at home and warp to the merchants’ guild with Sherry.
In order to attach 2x Intelligence skill, I don’t have a Kobold Monster Card.
I placed an order with Luke but there has been no notification of a successful bid.

“Can you go and look at the last successful bid on Kobold Monster Card?”
“Understood.”

I have Sherry check the last successful bid in the waiting room of the merchants’ guild.
The notebook, which the results of the auctions are recorded in, is kept in the waiting room.
Sherry turns over the papyrus of the notebook.

“Did you find it?”
“There was a successful bid of 5,500 Nars for Goat Monster Card today. Kobold Monster Card had a successful bid of 5,200 Nars yesterday. There was another bid of 5,200 Nars four days ago.”

Goat Monster Card went for 5,500 Nars, indeed.
He seems to make bids in accordance with the instructions given at the time of placing order.
Kobold Monster Card went for 5,200 Nars two successive times.
I have a bad feeling about this.

The person, who I sold the weapon with MP Absorption skill to, bought it at 5,200 Nars, too.
Is someone else buying the cards this time?
It’s the same card, Kobold Monster Card, and the same price.
There’s a possibility.

I return home immediately.
I must prepare the bath.
I select Basic Fire Magic as the skill of Jobless and use Waterwall and Firewall simultaneously.

“Damn!”

When I hold my hand out into the water, which was falling in the bathtub, it was really hot.
Success!
It worked better than I expected.
It really is boiling water hell.

Hot water is being produced via Waterwall and Firewall.
Now that I can produce water and heat it at the same time, it has become fairly easy.
We can now have bath more frequently.

However, the rate of consumption of MP hasn’t decreased, so I still have to recover my MP halfway through.
Rather, the efficiency of the process might have gone down due to Firewall.
For the first time after starting, I move to the labyrinth with Roxanne in order to recover my MP.

Because Wall magic designates the point of manifestation roughly, the points where the two magic spells manifest doesn’t overlap often.
They often stray away.
I wonder if I’ll get better at it if I practise more.

Another mistake I made was to have selected Basic Fire Magic as the skill of Jobless.
I should have selected water magic.
Because the water was quite hot, it would need to be regulated with more water.
Due to which, the frequency of Waterwall would naturally be more.

Oh well, it can’t be helped now.
At that time, I didn’t think it would go so well.
Next time, should I go with water magic then?

After having dinner, I take bath with everyone.
After getting our bodies washed, we soak ourselves in the hot water.
In the bathtub, I pull Roxanne close to me.
Sherry comes close, too.

I hold Roxanne and Sherry in both my arms.
Near my feet are Miria and Vesta.
It feels like I'm on a flowerbed.

Miria is floating excitedly.
Vesta…'s are floating, too.
I knew it! Having bath was the right decision.
Justice prevails.

As the skill of Jobless, I will try Critical Outbreak and Rare Ingredients Drop Rate Up next.
If I chose Gambler's or Cook's skills as the skill of Jobless, wouldn't it be a redundancy?
And it's not an immediate need anyway.
Also, even if it stacks, it'll only be 10% which is not much.

If it stacks, should I try Increased Vigor of Sex Maniac?
If Increased Vigor stacks, will the power of Abstinence Strike go up?
If it's true that the power of Abstinence Strike is directly proportional to the accumulated vigor, won't the speed of accumulation of vigor go up with two Increased Vigor skills?

I don't want to try it too much, though.
Since it will be really difficult for me to contain my sex drive.

Presently, I don't feel any need for more than one Increased Vigor.
So I won't try it forcibly.
After the bath, too, I didn't feel any need for more than one.

Next day. After having breakfast, I head to the merchants' guild.
I call for Luke and then enter the meeting room.

"Do you remember the broker who I received the Sacred Spear from?"

Luke takes out the Goat Monster Card.
It's the Goat Monster Card, undoubtedly.
The bid succeeded, after all.

"The heir of whose head family was receiving a noble's daughter as wife?"
"To tell you the truth, the bid this time was a little high, so I would like

to withdraw. Rather, if I succeed in the fusion of the previous Goat Monster Card and attach 2x Intelligence skill, I would then like to return it."
"2x Intelligence?"
"I know that it's unreasonable for there exists some kind of contract, still."

Earlier, I placed order for just one Goat Monster Card.
Would this be a suitable excuse for that?
Whatever I said to deceive him, he won't remember, surely.

"Ah, un"
"Alternatively, I would like to repurchase it when I get my hands on a Kobold Monster Card."

I bought two kobold monster cards from that broker.
If it's still remaining, I will repurchase it.

The ones I bought are all used up; I don't have any at hand.
If it's not remaining, will I be declined?
It can also mean that it's already taken.

"That broker has resumed bidding on Kobold Monster Card. For the time being, it will be impossible to have a successful bid within 5,000 Nars."

That broker seems to be the one who won the Kobold Monster Card at 5,200 Nars.
That's why the price is same, too.

"Kobold Monster Card?"
"After acquiring a weapon with MP Absorption skill, and it being a staff, those nobles are extremely rejoiced. And now, they're looking for other weapons of a wizard's use."

Is he being forced by those nobles?
Nobles are greedy. Rather, nobility wouldn't flourish without greed.
They have even sold their child, whom they took great pains to raise as a wizard, to that broker's house.
Even though they're called nobles, they're not worth it.

"This time around, it doesn't have to be one with MP Absorption

skill?”
“Yes.”
“Even if it isn’t a staff?”
“Any weapon a wizard can use would do. However, because they’re noble, it’ll be troublesome if it’s something common. Also, it should better be 2x Intelligence rather than Increase in Intelligence.”

Now then, what do I do?
The price of Kobold Monster Card will stay high until that broker arranges a weapon.
Furthermore, the cards effective for a weapon of wizard’s use will go extinct, too.
Goat Monster Card is secured but it will be really difficult to get a Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card.

And I’m afraid that there will be no Kobold Monster Card left, too.
I want to avoid a zero-return scenario.

“I have a Rod of Offerings at hand.”
“You have?”
“That’s right. I’ll be willing to sell it if I get at least one Kobold Monster Card.”

Because I have just bought a Goat Monster Card, I’ll be able to attach 2x Intelligence skill right away if I get my hands on a Kobold Monster Card.

“Is it really Rod of Offerings?”
“I’ll gladly sell it if I get a monster card in addition.”
“It’s a weapon of wizard’s use, but.”
“Scissor-esque Carnivorous Plant Monster Card would do, too.”

I got impatient for a moment but it’s fine now.

“I see, so you need it for that shrine maiden.”

It seems to be fine.

“As for the Rod of Offerings, it’s not like I’m doing a favor. As long as it’s around the market price, it would do.”
“I understand. I’ll convey it to him.”

Although I won't be able to try whether 2x Intelligence on an accessory stacks with the one on a weapon or not, it can't be helped.
Well, it is supposed to be impossible anyway.

I finish the talks with Luke and return home.
After returning from the guild, I check some accessories out in the armor shop.
Earring seems to be the highest tier accessory available in the armor shop.
The most number of empty skill slots is three.

Earring, huh?
Would it be alright for me to put it on?

It's not like the men who wear earring are weak or anything.
However, if I were to wear earring back in Japan, I would be absolutely laughed at.
I'd rather prefer to be ignored than be laughed at.

"I-Is there any problem if I wear earring?"
"There's no problem, of course."
"A-As expected, it's a good accessory. Is its defensive capability high?"
"Accessories basically provide defense against magic. The better the accessory, the higher the defense, obviously."

I ask Sherry curiously.
Does it increase magic defense?
It's such a trap that earring doesn't increase physical defense.
Although I had already guessed that it was related to magic in some way or another, I was of the idea that it was something worthless but it doesn't seem to be the case.

It has a neat effect. Earring seems to be good.
Or is it good because it's not a piercing type?

Because it's an accessory in this world, no one will associate it to ladies' jewellery.
Roxanne, however, is choosing earring and ring with sparkling eyes.
But Roxanne is always like that when choosing, isn't she?

Isn’t she?

“This one’s shine is nice.”
“Beautiful, desu.”
“I think it looks pretty.”

The criteria of selection of these three is funny.
However, fortunately, there are three empty skill slots on this one.
This one would do.

“How about this?”
“Un, this one?”
“Here.”
“It doesn’t look bad.”

After Roxanne’s approval, I pick another one with three empty skill slots.
It’s for the sake of 30% discount.
To be honest, though, I don’t get how this one is different from the rest.

Chapter 143 - Fatty Tuna

In the evening, I experiment with the skill of Jobless.
This time, I try Critical Outbreak.
I wonder if it can stack with Critical Outbreak skill of Gambler.
Will the rate be doubled?

How will Increase in Critical Rate bonus skill act?
Will it apply on just one skill or both?
There are so many questions.

Even though I can use magic continuously, it consumes MP just as quickly.
If critical proc's, more damage can be inflicted for the same consumption of MP.
It hasn't been confirmed, though. There's a possibility that consumption of MP increases if critical proc's.
However, even a normal physical attack, which doesn't consume MP, can turn out critical; so I believe that the consumption of MP remains same even if critical proc's.

If that's the case, it will be more efficient using Critical Outbreak as the skill of Jobless to increase damage than using Basic Magic as the skill of Jobless to increase spells.
Such a possibility exists in theory.
Therefore, I'm going to try various things.
I invoke Skill Settings and choose Critical Outbreak skill of Gambler as the skill of Jobless.

"This is the last experiment for the day. I won't be able to use spells continuously, so the duration of battle will be longer."
"No problem."
"Can you guide us to a place with a lot of monsters, please?"
"Understood. This way."

We advance under the guidance of Roxanne.
As expected, it's reassuring to have Roxanne.
I cast Sandstorm at a group of Ma Breams which we came across.

Because I can cast only one earth spell at a time, it's taking more time to finish off the monsters.

Before long, I conclude that this experiment is a failure.
A failure.
I should have realized it before undertaking it.

Whether critical proc'd or not, I can ascertain only on the basis of the number of spells cast.
What does that signify?

Even if the rate of critical hits is double now, the number of spells cast will reduce only by one or two.
Even if a monster, that dies in eight spells, died in seven spells, it would fall into the scope of trial error and would hence be ignored.
After recording results of about a hundred runs would a significant difference be evident.
Nah, I don't have time for that.

"Ah. Alright then, let's move to Quratar's labyrinth."
"Did you find out something?"

An experiment is something which results in failure most of the times.
And the person who can learn from a failed experiment is called a true, great scientist, Sherry-kun.

What I found from this experiment is that even if the rate of critical hits is double, consumption of MP doesn't decrease much.
Even though I had two Critical Outbreak skills on, the number of spells cast was reduced at most by one or two.
Which proves that it's better to obediently choose Basic Magic as the skill of Jobless.
Because it has been proven, can't it be said that the experiment was a success?

It was a success.
A success.
Actually, it may even be called a great success.

"Whole fish, desu."

Miria brings a whole fish.

One of the Ma Breams seems to have dropped a whole fish.
This alone would warrant it to be called a success.

Thereafter, on Quratar's 11th floor, I observe for a longer period of time whether Critical Outbreak stacks or not.
Normally, I can't take out monsters on 11th floor in one strike of Durandal.
However, if critical proc's, I can.

Once you figure it out, it's easy.
It can thus be ascertained whether critical proc'd or not.
I should have undertaken the experiment on 11th floor from the outset.

The number of monsters that died in one strike were half the total, huh?
The number is too high to deny that Critical Outbreak skills of Gambler and Jobless stack.
It may also mean that Increase in Critical Rate applies on both the skills.

The skill of Jobless has quite a potential.
It can be big, depending on how I use it.
Only regret is that there's just one empty skill slot.

With the experiment over, we return home.
There's a note from Luke left at the entrance.
I would like to hold the talks today.

"Master, there's a message from Mr. Luke. He asks of you to visit him at once."
"Oh well, I would have anyway."

Even though he didn't mention, I know what it's about.
But there shouldn't be any urgent need. I can visit tomorrow morning, too.

If I wait till tomorrow morning, we can reach the boss room of Haruba's 22nd floor.
We are adequately strong, aren't we?
Although I bought earring, I'm not using it. There's no Kobold

Monster Card either.

However, there won't be any problem with the level of our current battle strength.
Also, I haven't parted with the Rod of Offerings yet.

"Do, desu."

One certain individual is motivated already.
Instead of Cook, I switch Jobless to Warrior.
If I don't get fatty tuna after a number of tries, I'll think about selecting Cook.
If worse comes to worst, I have another ace up my sleeves. Choosing Cook's skill as the skill of Jobless and stack it with Cook's skill, that is.

"Please."

From the waiting room, we proceed to the boss room.
After casting Abnormal Status Resistance Down on Black Diamond Tuna, I take on Ma Bream.
Vesta confronts the Ma Bream from the front while I sneak attack it from the back using Durandal.

It isn't cowardly.
It's a strategy.
Because the attacks of the monster are directed to Vesta, I'm having it easy.
As long as I'm careful of the swing of its tail, I'll be safe.

When I hammer a Rush into the Ma Bream, I hear a sound.

"Did it, desu."

When I was trying to figure out what it was, the Black Diamond Tuna falls onto the ground, petrified.
It seems to have turned into stone before I could finish off the Ma Bream.
I really wonder if the chance of petrifaction depends on the motivation of the user.
Nah, it must be a coincidence.

“Go there.”

Roxanne and company join us and encircle the Ma Bream.
There is no chance for Ma Bream to win now that all the members of the party have surrounded it.
We take it out easily.

After switching Warrior to Cook, I head to the petrified Black Diamond Tuna.
The Ma Bream dropped a white fish.
I wonder what the Black Diamond Tuna will drop.

I stab Durandal from right above the Black Diamond Tuna.
When it gets petrified, the tuna becomes easier.
It’s not easy when it’s moving.
It’s an unpleasant opponent.

I keep on thrusting into the tuna like a piston.
Up and down. Repeatedly. Intensely.
Intensely. Violently.
My passion keeps surging up.

How about that, huh?
How about that?

The tuna is just lying there like a dead fish.
It’s not answering.
The piston is doing all the talking.

I can also use magic but currently, I’m using Cook’s skill as the skill of Jobless.
I should be able to take it out with Durandal.
Ah. Since there’s no fear of getting attacked at the moment, Should I remove Monk?

Oh well, whatever.
I can finish it off with Durandal alone.
It will take a few more stabs at best.

The Black Diamond Tuna turns into smoke. Durandal hits the ground.
It’s dead?
When the smoke dissipates, there was an item remaining.

“Fatty tuna, desu.”

Miria exclaims and jumps at it.
Her movement was faster than any monster’s I have ever seen.
I wonder if Miria’s motivation has something to do with the chance of it dropping fatty tuna.
Not really. It’s due to my selecting Cook.

Miria brings both the white fish and the fatty tuna.
One person alone can’t carry both.
It did drop fatty tuna, huh?

Come to think of it, who taught Miria the Brahim word ‘fatty tuna’?
She learnt it before I even knew it.
Like I thought, she learns fish related words quickly.

“We will have fatty tuna for tomorrow’s dinner. Miria will be cooking it. Actually, we will have two.”
“Yes, desu.”

I was prepared to do several rounds anyway. Because we got it at first attempt, however, all my preparation will go to waste.
So we will keep doing it until we get one more fatty tuna.
I would also like to try fighting the boss with magic.

“Which monster appears on Haruba’s 23rd floor?”

I ask Sherry after we were out of the boss room.
Even though I intend to fight Black Diamond Tuna again, it’s better to advance to 23rd floor for now.

“Scissors Lizard. It uses fire magic and is also resistant to fire magic. It’s weakness is earth magic. It drops leather, albeit rarely.”
“Leather?”
“It’s a raw material used in making equipment. Monsters on 23rd floor and onward use area of effect magic attacks. Because it can’t be dodged, it’s troublesome. I don’t think we will die in one hit, though.”

Sherry gives us the bad news.
Area of effect magic attack, huh?
Firestorm, which I use, hits with certainty. Now monsters will be able

to use it, too.

“Will it be alright?”
“With Master here, there won’t be any problem.”
“It still hasn’t been long since we first entered the labyrinth. I haven’t heard any account of anyone advancing to 23rd floor so quickly. I have heard that Dragon Knight brings stability to the party but again, it hasn’t been long since Vesta joined us.”

Sherry adds to my unease.
Normally, people train for years before stepping into 23rd floor.
It’s still too soon for us which is the cause of my unease.

That said, we have an advantage over other people and that’s Gained Experience 20x.
It has only been half a month since Vesta joined us.
But she has already reached Dragon Knight Lv29.

“Oh well, we won’t know unless we fight. If worse comes to worst, there’s Sacrificial Misanga. If we’re lucky, it’ll sacrifice itself for us.”
“Th-That’s right. There’s Sacrificial Misanga.”

I convince Sherry on the pretext of Sacrificial Misanga.
It’s the equipment Sherry made herself.

My sixth sense says that there will be no danger.
If there was such a big difference between the difficulty levels of 22nd and 23rd floors, I must have heard something in this regard.
Not just Sherry, there must have been some warning from the guild, too.
Or I must have discovered the difference between mortality rates of 22nd and 23rd floors.

The attacks of the monsters on 22nd floor were not fatal.
I don’t believe I will die in one blow on a floor that’s just one level above.
Even though there’s a difference between area of effect magic attack and physical attack.
If it weren’t so, 23rd floor would be full of dead bodies.

I understand this because I often go to the front when I use Durandal

in order to recover my MP.
My bad.

“Are you all fine with it?”
“Of course. I will follow Master.”
“Yes, desu.”
“I think it’ll be alright.”

The three of them seem to be fine with it.
I thought that Vesta will be apprehensive about the impending crisis for it has only been half a month since she first entered the labyrinth with us.

However, Vesta has already been attacked by the monsters on 22nd floor.
At that time, she looked as if nothing happened.
It has reached a point where she doesn’t need even one Heal.
Now that she has leveled up, she has become a lot stronger, surely.

“Let’s go then.”
“Yes.”

From 22nd floor, we move to 23rd.
Even though it’s 23rd floor, there’s same small room at the entrance.
There’s same black wall behind us. And there’s same cave ahead of us which separates into three different paths.

“Roxanne, do you know the smell of Scissors Lizard?”
“I haven’t encountered it before but there’s a monster which I haven’t smelled before. That’s probably it.”
“Is it nearby? The fewer the better.”
“Although it’s not close, I can smell a group of monsters which I haven’t smelled before. They seem to be small in number.”

Roxanne is, as expected, useful.
Since they seem to use area of effect magic attacks, the fewer we encounter in the beginning, the better.
Imagine a group of five Scissors Lizards all shooting area of effect magic attacks at the same time.
And all the attacks hit.

Huh?
Now that I think about it, spells can't be cast simultaneously but what about monsters?
Because they don't use incantation but construct magic formation, is it different?
What if they all invoke their skills and Sherry's Incantation Interruption skill doesn't make it in time?

Bad monster is bad, indeed.
Anyways, the point is, we should avoid fighting five monsters right away.
Stress reduces lifespan.

"Well then, let's return to 22nd floor and retry the boss battle."
"Yes, desu."

We return to 22nd floor and take out the Black Diamond Tuna again.
Petrifaction didn't proc this time, neither did it drop fatty tuna.
Nor I had cook on, so it can't be helped.

"Roxanne, is there a small group of Scissors Lizards nearby?"

After finishing off the boss and returning to 23rd floor, I ask Roxanne.

"No, it's same as before. No one seems to have passed through here. There's no small group nearby."

Ah
If no party passes through and disturbs an area, the position of the monsters in that area remains the same?
So if someone kills them, a different combination spawns?

There are less people in Haruba's labyrinth to begin with and even less on 23rd floor.
When time passes, the monsters move about but not much time has passed since we were last here.
Should I pass some more time and see what happens?

Chapter 144 - Scissors Lizard

I decide to continue fighting the boss of 22nd floor.
Using Dungeon Walk, I move to a small room close to the boss room and then walk to the room.

“I plan on fighting the next boss battle using magic. I want to test if the magic will work in the boss battles or not.”
“Understood. I don’t believe you will have any trouble since it’s you, Master.”
“Even if the boss is strong, we defeated Ma Breams in quick battles, so I don’t think we will have any problem. Black Diamond Tuna is similar to Ma Bream as it’s resistant to water and weak against earth magic.”

It should be fine since sherry said there is no problem, shouldn’t it?
I feel a bit of relief.

“What should we do with the battle formation?”

Roxanne brings up a question.
This time around, there is an issue with the formation, too, huh?
If I am going to defeat the boss using magic, there is also the possibility of waiting instead of attacking first.
It wouldn’t buy us that much time, though.

“We will do it like we usually do. Roxanne, Sherry and Miria will encircle the Black Diamond Tuna; Vesta will take care of the accompanying monster.”
“Understood.”

Also, the boss room is not that large.
So I guess there is no need to change the battle formation unnecessarily.

“I will lend Vesta this sword since this is only a test.”
“Yes, thank you very much.”

I pass Durandal to Vesta in the waiting room.

Although Vesta can't use Rush, her battle prowess shouldn't be any low.
Overall, it will be rather efficient since I will be using magic.

However, if that's the case, won't it take less time?
I have to wait for the change in positions on 23rd floor.
Oh well, if it doesn't work, I'll just do more rounds.

The door to the boss room opens immediately and we go inside.
I'm no longer sure if having scarce number of people is a good thing or bad.

The smoke gathers and monsters appear.
This time, it's a Rtoll Troll accompanying the Black Diamond Tuna.
It is disadvantageous to fight monsters using magic when they have different elemental weakness but there is nothing I can do about it.

I cast Sandstorms continuously while standing close to the door.
Because the boss is stronger, I have to use the magic of same element as the boss' weakness.
After shooting two Sandstorms, I cast Abnormal Status Resistance Down on the Black Diamond Tuna.
Roxanne, Sherry and Miria surround the boss.

Vesta charge the Rtoll Troll with Durandal.
The Rtoll Troll raises its arms up.
Vesta calmly takes her stance.
She evades the punch and attacks the monster's arm from the side using both her swords.

Her two sword didn't hit the same spot but slashed top and bottom.
Brutal.
It must have been more painful since it was not at the same spot.

I am not sure about monsters.
But its arm would be disabled if it were human.
Actually, if it's Durandal, it will cut the bone of a human into two.

As for the Black Diamond Tuna, Roxanne is attacking from the front while Miria is running around and attacking it from behind.
Sherry is thrusting her spear from the side.

I cast earth spells continuously.

A magic formation appears under the Black Diamond Tuna for an instant.
Sherry, however, cancels it immediately.

This battle formation doesn't appear to have any flaw.
The boss battle is going smooth. Using the spacious room, we have separated both the monsters.
It is difficult for me to concentrate on two monsters at the same time.
Because we have separated both the boss and the accompanying monster, Sherry can't keep an eye on both of them.

Earlier, I used to suppress the accompanying monster myself using Durandal.
This time, it's Vesta who is using Durandal.
Although the boss possesses more powerful magic and skill, it is not a good idea to let the other monster run lose.
We have two weapons with Incantation Interruption skill.

If I can fight using magic, won't I be able to send Durandal back when fighting?
It doesn't make any difference for me to fight using Durandal and [Rush].
But it is safer for me to fight from the distance using magic.

The Rtoll Troll collapses.
The finishing blow was delivered by Vesta with Durandal instead of my magic.
After handing Vesta Durandal, it's even more impossible for me to deliver the finishing blow.

I slip next to Sherry and cast Sandball at the Black Diamond Tuna from the back.
Vesta moves to the opposite side and attacks it with both her swords.
After everyone circles it, we defeat the boss.
Vesta delivers the finishing blow with Durandal again.

The tuna falls onto the ground and turns into smoke.

Leaving lean tuna behind.
We decide to retry it. There's no helping it.
Even if I defeat it with my magic, I didn't have Cook on.

"Lean tuna, desu."

Miria brings over the lean tuna only.
She doesn't seem interested in the item dropped by the Rtoll Troll.

"Although It took quite some time, it's not like I can't fight using magic. Nevertheless, I will fight like I used to onward from next battle. We will continue with the boss battle until it drops fatty tuna."

At any rate, if I have to bring out Durandal when fighting, there is a little meaning in using magic when fighting.
From now on, it will be better to fight as usual.

"Okay, desu."

I receive the tuna meat and put it inside my Item Box.

"I believe it was good to check whether you can fight using magic or not, especially, since it will be two accompanying monsters to come out in the boss battles onward from 23rd floor."
"Really?"
"Yes."

Sherry advises.
Onward from 23rd floor, since the number of monsters in the boss battles will increase, it will be better to use area of effect magic, huh?
It will difficult in various ways.

A labyrinth is a living being, after all. I doubt it would want to be done for so easily.
On the other hand, although it feeds on people, no one would go inside if it became strong right from the first floor.
The first floor is easy.
However, moving up the floors, it reinforces its defense.

It's actually good in a way.
Thanks to it, people are gradually getting stronger, too.

“If there will be three monsters in the boss battles, it may be better to fight using magic.”
“I guess so.”
“However, we need to come up with a battle formation.”

The only two weapons we have with Incantation Interruption are Durandal and Sherry’s spear.
We can’t deal with them one to one if there are three monsters.

“If I use spear, I cover some distance, so I think I can deal with two monsters by myself.”
“Really? I will be depending on you then.”

Sherry can do it, apparently.
She’s extremely reliable.
Sherry is also quite useful in battles.
Doesn’t that make me look even more useless?

“That way, we should be able to find a group of Ma Breams. There is a strong smell of Ma Breams coming from there, so there should be quite a number of them.”

Upon reaching 23rd floor, Roxanne confirms the smell.
There seems to be change in the positions.

“Good, as expected of Roxanne. Let’s head that way then?”

We advance under Roxanne’s guidance.
If we are going to fight anyway, it’s better to fight sooner.

On the way, I switch Gambler to Alchemist.
I cast Plating on all party members.
Just in case something happens.

“Next time, when we meet the monsters, it will be better to approach them rather than waiting for them like we used to.”
“N? Ah, I see.”
“Because we have this.”

Sherry suggests while showing off her Steel Spear of Authority.
Even if the enemy tries to shoot area of effect magic attack, it will be possible to cancel the attack if they are within the range of the

spear.
Is that why it is better for us to close them down instead?
This weapon is more useful than I thought.

“Got it. However, I am planning to receive the first one, so try not to cancel it quickly, please.”
“Understood.”

We can’t afford to cower forever. We should try to receive one area of effect magic attack, at least.
I issue instructions to Sherry in this respect.
I think it will be fine to wait instead of rushing over to attack but they may shoot a second attack while we are waiting.
I guess it is better to approach them after all.

Monsters appear.
Two Ma Breams and one Scissors Lizard.
As expected of Roxanne.
It is the combination I wanted.

The four of them start running.
I fire a barrage of Sandstorms.
Ma Bream and Scissors Lizard have the same elemental weakness, that is earth, so there is no need to change the skill of Jobless.

Scissors Lizard is a lizard with scissors.
It has scissors hands just like crayfish.
Its body, however, is that of a lizard’s.
Its face is like a reptile’s. It has a tail, too.

Maybe it’s because of the tail that it somewhat looks like a crayfish.
FOFFOFFOFFO, I burst into laughter inwardly.
It is a crayfish serving.

With the sand dancing, I close in.
I was planning on casting another spell once it faded but it didn’t go well for I was on the move.
In order to interrupt incantation, it’s needed to keep a certain degree of focus.

Just like it is difficult to cast spells while swinging a sword around.

It’s the same.
I stop and cast the next magic spell.
Roxanne and company confront the monsters quickly.

“That one, Miria.”
“Okay.”

Miria seems to be attacking the Scissors Lizard.
I thought Roxanne sent her there because it was the enemy closest to her but she seems to be betting on petrifaction.

Sherry positions herself diagonally behind Miria.
She doesn’t seem to be attacking.
Because I told her that we need to receive the first shot.
Because there is a chance of cancelling the lizard’s magic attack if she thrusts her spear while it’s constructing magic formation.

The Scissors Lizard swings its scissors down.
Miria blocks it with her shield.
After blocking, she thrusts her estoc of petrifaction.
Petrifaction didn’t proc.

“It’s coming.”

Before I arrive at the front, Roxanne warns.
Magic formation appears under the Ma Bream.
It’s gonna be Ma Bream, huh?

Sherry hits it and cancels the attack with her spear.
It was correct decision to close in from the outset.
We wouldn’t have arrived in time had we waited.
Roxanne would easily dodge it, however, if it was a mere water shot.

I catch up with the vanguards and stand behind Vesta.
It is dangerous to stand behind Roxanne.
I cast an earth spell.

The two Ma Breams collapse.
Both Ma Bream and Scissors Lizard are weak against earth magic.
Since they didn’t fall at the same time, it means that the Scissors Lizard is stronger.

I switch to Sandball and blast the lizard.

After throwing quite a number of Sandballs, the lizard falls.
The monsters onward from 23rd floor seem to be a lot stronger.
However, the Scissors Lizard didn't use magic until it fell down.

Could it not use it?
Was that really so?
Well, if it were to shoot a barrage of attacks every battle, the difficulty of 23rd floor would be terribly high.
All that remains is to ascertain as to how frequently it uses area of effect magic attack.

"The difficulty of the battles on 23rd floor is a lot higher, to the point that we need to approach them fast. Also, the duration of the battles will be longer. Will you all be alright?"
"Its movement itself wasn't special at all, so I think it will be alright."

I knew it would be so for Roxanne.
Miria also confronted the Scissors Lizard from the front and she didn't allow it to get closer.

"The problem is the area of effect magic attack."
"True."

Sherry understands the main problem.

"Petrifaction, desu."
"I will be relying on you then."
"Okay, desu."

Petrification didn't proc this time but the more prolonged the battle, the higher the chance of Miria successfully inflicting petrifaction.

"I think it will be alright."

Vesta is reliable.

"Roxanne, is there any easy group of Scissors Lizard around? If not, we will go back to 22nd floor."
"This way, I think."

We advance following Roxanne.

I cast Plating on us all.
I want to fight until I am hit with an area of effect magic attack.
If I go back to the boss battle, I will have to remove Alchemist and add Cook or Warrior, which will remove the effect of Plating.

The next group comprises two Scissors Lizards.
Roxanne and Vesta rush, taking positions in the front.
Miria runs around, doing sort of hit-and-run.

When did Vesta get promoted to the main tank?
Well, she has the required physique, after all.
It gives a reliable feeling, watching her from the back.

Vesta repels the Scissors Lizard with her two two-handed swords.
The lizard's stance breaks after getting repelled.
Without missing this chance, she hammers it with her swords.
Miria thrusts her estoc of petrifaction into it from the side.

Like always, Roxanne is dodging the lizard's attacks by a hair's breadth.
The attacks appear to be hitting her when I look from the back.
But none of the attacks have landed.
From the back, Sherry is keeping an eye while holding her spear.

The way it is, our party looks solidly stable.
In the end, we finished them off before they could shoot area of effect magic attack.

I wonder if Scissors Lizard Lv23 can't use magic frequently.
Even though I just want to get hit once.

Next was a group of Scissors Lizard and Ma Bream, one each.
Miria's attack succeeded against the Scissors Lizard and petrifaction proc'd.
After that, we came across a lone Scissors Lizard. Everyone surrounded it because it was alone, and defeated it before it managed to shoot area of effect magic attack.
Moving further on, we encountered a group of Scissors Lizard, Ma Bream and Hat Bat, one each. The Scissors Lizard ended up petrified.
It's useless, isn't it?

Chapter 145 - Searching for Fatty Tuna

“Still no area of effect magic. I guess it can’t be helped, can you guide us to a place with lots of scissor lizards?”
“That seems to be the case, I’ll do that then.”

I changed Roxanne’s instructions.
My MP will run out early at the rate things are going.
I take out Durandal and finish off a Scissor Lizard that had been petrified.

We continue forward under Roxanne’s guidance.
She led us to a place with four Scissor Lizards.
Gah.
Suddenly the difficulty has gone up quite a bit.

Four people started running.
I use [Sand Storm] from my position.
After using two spells, I run after them.
The Scissor Lizards are coming this way as well.

The demons confront the vanguard formation.
Four lizards cram into a line.
There doesn’t seem to be a guy staying at the back.
If someone stayed at the back, they’d use magic, and that’s scary as well.

Scissor Lizards gathered, and swung their scissors.
Roxanne avoided it, Miria fended it off with her shield, and Vesta blocked with a sword.
Roxanne in particular is skillfully dodging the attacks of two Scissor Lizards.
I feel sorry for the Scissor Lizards whose attacks have become so useless.

Sherry is attacking one of the four with her spear.

She is ready in case they try to use multiple magic in quick succession.
I used another double [Sand Storm].
We are steadily defeating the Scissor Lizards.

“It’s coming.”
“I did it, desu.”

Roxanne and Miria shouted at the same time.
A red magic formation is at the feet of one of the Scissor Lizards.
Another Scissor Lizard has become petrified.
Is this finally the debut of the magic?

The magic formation disappears, and the lizard spits out a ball of fire.
Isn’t this single target attack magic?
The Scissor Lizards magic doesn’t seem to be area effect magic.

Roxanne could easily avoid it… but instead is hit by it.
Why?

“It doesn’t feel like anything we need to worry about.”

She seems to have taken the hit on purpose.
The exchange of attacks with the Scissor Lizards continues on.
While I continuously use magic, the petrified Scissor Lizard becomes smoke.
A little later, the other Scissor Lizards collapse as well.

“Are you alright?”
“There’s no problem. This isn’t enough damage to require healing either.”

I ask Roxanne while I heal her.
Are you alright?

For a Wizard, I do not believe there is a difference in strength between the single target magic and the area of effect magic.
Is it the same with demons?
Roxanne let herself be hit by the magic on purpose, but how should I estimate it?

Since they are demons, there is the possibility they have multiple types of magic.
Though the demon just now didn't do anything else.
Scissor Lizards should have at least two types of magic, single target and area of effect.

"Here, desu."

Miria brought leather.
It's the first time leather was dropped.
We defeated this many, and there's just one?
Since it isn't a rare cooking ingredient, it's drop rate won't even increase if I use Cook.

"Leather, lea-th-er."
"Leather, desu."

It's not the skin of a fish, so she'll have forgotten by tomorrow.

"Can you make equipment with this?"
"Yes, though it normally takes many years for a Master Smith to get to that stage."
"You won't have a problem Sherry. You can do it."
"Right."

I reassured Sherry.
I'm more worried about the Scissor Lizards magic.
I'd like the opinion of Sherry's common sense.

"The problem is the Scissor Lizards magic. Do you think it's safe?"
"I think you don't need to worry about a single blow. Even in the worst case we can endure a number of them, but they don't seem to use them often. It looks like we'll be able to fight fine."

Sherry seems to trust Roxanne's evaluation.
Are you alright Sherry?

Area effect magic will hit all of us.
With that in mind, it would be a cheat if the strength of it became too high.
We can probably believe that it's power isn't any different from the single target attack magic.

The Scissor Lizards still haven't used the area effect magic.
We can't wait for it forever.
It looks like we are fine on the 23rd floor at least.

"Shall we head back to the 22nd floor now?"
"Yes, desu."

It's no use just waiting around for the area effect magic.
We move to the small room nearby the floor 22 boss room using [Dungeon Walk], and then head to the boss room.
Along the way I switch out Alchemist for Gambler.
For the Black Diamond Tuna, it will be good if I can use [Abnormal resistance decrease] and have the boss petrified again, and then switch to Cook.

I use Durandal against the boss, and recover MP.
Sherry makes the decisive blow against the Black Diamond Tuna, and Vesta did the Ma Bream.
Fatty Tuna did not drop.
Next time?

"It's hard to reach the demons with the spear like this. Roxanne and Vesta, can you draw the demons a bit closer together?"
"I understand. I'll do it."
"Yes. I think I can."

Sherry seems to be practicing for using [Incantation Interruption] on multiple demons.
It wouldn't be good for her to be running around.

Vesta will use Durandal on the boss fight on the 23rd floor.
Sherry will be in charge of backing up Miria and Roxanne.
It might be better to practice with Miria and Roxanne.

But, Miria has the important role of petrifying the Black Diamond Tuna.
She isn't an Assassin yet so we could pass the Estoc of Petrification to Roxanne, but it's best to just leave it as her job.
I don't need to switch it.

In the following boss battle, we didn't charge straight at the demons,

but instead waited for them to move a bit closer.
Roxanne stood in front of the Black Diamond Tuna, and Vesta waited for the Rtoll Troll.
Sherry stood behind the two people.
Miria and I joined in after the demons had approached.

I defeated the Rtoll Troll with Durandal this time.
The strategy is a little better.

“I did it, desu.”

Miria’s petrification worked.
The Black Diamond Tuna is a dead fish.
Even though I used Cook while defeating it, only lean tuna is dropped.
Another round?

“I think we’ve got the positions alright. You can fight as normal now Roxanne.”
“Okay.”
“On the 23rd floor boss you’ll be backing up Roxanne and Miria, Sherry.”
“We only had to wait a moment, so there should be no problem letting Roxanne handle positioning.”

With the planning, I don’t think there will be any problems for the time being.
Now we just need the fatty tuna.

“I’ve gotten a rough idea of it, so it should be alright. Miria, do you understand too?”
“Yes, desu.”
“Ok, on to the next round then.”

We try the boss again for the fatty tuna.
That round, there was no petrification and Sherry got the finishing blow.
The demon fell to the floor.

“Yes, desu!”

Oh?

Was it petrified?
I thought that, but the tuna turned to smoke.
Miria ran over to the wall.

“What happened?”
“A magic crystal, desu.”

A magic crystal seems to have been made.
You left the lean tuna to get the magic crystal?

Fish savings seem to be more important than lean tuna.
We probably wouldn’t find the magic crystals without Miria.
Even if Miria doesn’t pick up the lean tuna, someone will get it.

Since it was just lean tuna, we decide to go again.
Miria handed the magic crystal to me with a smile, so I praised her with a “You did well”.
When we find magic crystal, we can decide on having fish for the next days dinner.
Well, tomorrows dinner is already fatty tuna.

So we repeat the fight again, trying to get fatty tuna.
I’ll set Cook’s [Increased drop rate for rare ingredients] as Jobless’s skill if it doesn’t drop soon.
Since [Critical outbreak] skills seemed to work together, there is a good chance that Cook’s [Increased drop rate for rare ingredients] skill will work together as well.
There’s the problem that I can’t quickly change it again, but we’ll have a break to eat breakfast after this anyway.

After another two tries, Miria’s petrification worked, and fatty tuna dropped.
When I stabbed the tuna to death, it became smoke and left fatty tuna behind.
Probably because I’m using Cook’s [Increased drop rate for rare ingredients].
It’s quite useful.

“Good. This will be tomorrows dinner.”
“Yes, desu.”

Finally the repeated boss battles are over.
Miria passes the fatty tuna to me reluctantly.
I receive it, and place it in the [Item box].

“How is the time?”
“The sun should already be up.”
“We’ll stop here then.”
“Okay.”

I check the time with Roxanne, and finish the exploration.
I don’t know if changing Jobless’s skill would have helped or not.
Oh well.

Even if I test it, it will be hard to tell for certain if the two effects overlap.
The single effect isn’t that big to start with.
It’s not worth doing an experiment to check either.

I use [Warp] from the labyrinth, to the wall of the adventurers guild.
We buy ingredients for breakfast, and then return home.

“There is only one leather, can we make something with that much?”

At the end of the meal, I ask Sherry.

“Ah, yes. The leather mitten equipment can be made with it. It uses one leather, and one hide.”
“It uses two kinds of materials?”
“That’s right.”

Do they overlap to reinforce the leather?
The outside might be hide, and the inside might be leather.
Or maybe since it’s for the hand, the part in the palm might be hide.

“We have hide too, so make it when your finished eating.”
“Ah… yes.”
“We’ll get plenty of leather as we fully explore the 23rd floor. We’ll make another piece of equipment tonight.”
“Um, ah, okay.”

Sherry is worried about it, but she doesn’t need to.
Master Smith has risen to Lv34.

Sherry worried whenever I asked her to make new equipment up to now.
She hasn't noticed there's no problem yet?

"We haven't had any problems so far."
"Making leather equipment is a graduation for a Master Smith from apprentice. Only dwarves who have had ten years experience can do it."
"It should be fine for Sherry. If it isn't, we can try it again another time."
"Yes."

Sherry agrees.
Even if I say another time, it won't take long to reach Master Smith Lv35.
We don't need to wait a year to try again.

This time feels serious.
I hope you succeed.

Sherry seemed to succeed making the leather mittens easily.
When she finished, leather mittens were left in her hand.
Like I thought, there doesn't seem to be any problem.

"As expected of Sherry, you don't need to worry so much."
"Oh, I can do it."

Sherry passes me the leather mittens.
I let myself relax.

"Amazing, Sherry."
"As expected, desu."
"That's incredible."

I didn't start cleaning up, and listened to Sherry being praised by the other three.

"I'm heading to the merchants guild, please finish up here."
"Yes. Have a safe trip."

From her appearance, Sherry doesn't seem to have overused her MP.

I leave Roxanne to organize the rest, and [Warp] to the merchants guild.

Luke and the other broker met me in the waiting room straight away.
The other broker is the same weapons dealer from recently.
The talks seem to have gone smoothly.

“I have the Rod of Offerings.”

I start speaking in the conference room straight away, since greetings are annoying.

“Here, this is it.”
“Let me have a look.”

I pull the Rod of Offerings from my [Item box], and the weapons dealer analyzes it straight away.

“How is it?”
“There’s no doubt, this is it.”

Luke asks, and is answered.
There can’t be any mistakes.

“The Rod of Offerings is alright?”
“It’s good.”

The weapons dealer is interested.
The Rod of Offerings is a follow up trade to the Soul Sucking Staff.
It would be bad if I seemed too reliable, but with Sherry we could do work to a certain extent.
It will be difficult to strike a balance.

“You need at least this much to enter the labyrinth.”
“Yes, you seem quite young, are you from a good family?”
“Well, I’m from a long way away. I’d prefer to talk about the trade.”

The gossip chat stops a bit abruptly.
I’m not much for idle chatter.
If I say something accidentally I might be troubled later.
If I say that I’m from far away, there might be less problems.

I told Roxanne and Cassia that I’m from far away, so there’s no

contradiction.
It would be dangerous if I said I was from somewhere local like Vale.

This isn't the kind of society where a youth leaves their area to head to the city.
You'd need some kind of circumstances to leave your village and move away.
You don't need to come to Quratar just because you are an Explorer, there are labyrinths everywhere, and that would just lead to abandoned villages.
I won't tell them about my circumstances.

Chapter 146 - Loss

“These are Kobold Monster Cards. There are two of them. I have yet to acquire other cards.”
“Is that so?”

The weapons merchant takes out the monster cards as per the deal.
Two Kobold Monster Cards.
He has placed orders for different monster cards but he hasn’t acquired any yet.

There’s a possibility that he’s not telling the truth.
He probably wants to bargain with me using cheaper cards. Oh well, even if he possesses other cards, it’s no use.
There’s no guarantee that the fusion will succeed.

“Instead, I was able to acquire a staff this time. If it’s of use to you, I can give it to you for cheap.”

The weapons merchant brings out a stick.
It’s a staff.
Is he selling it because he no longer needs it?

I’m not too sure that he arranged it this time.
He must have acquired it earlier, before he bought the Sacred Spear.
After all, a short-sighted person can’t be a broker.

“It’s not the best but it’s a staff nonetheless.”
“I guess. I knew you would have many in possession.”
“I acquired it back then, before I got the Sacred Spear.”

The staff, which the weapons merchant brought out, doesn’t have any empty skill slot.
If he fused monster cards with this one, he would fail.
I’ll be better off without it.

“There’s this, too.”

The weapons merchant withdraws the staff and takes out another stick.
It seems to be called Damascus stick.
It's a stick with a striped pattern.
It comes with one empty skill slot.

"Damascus stick?"
"So you know, huh? It's a Damascus stick, indeed."
"I don't have many stick-type weapons but if you want one, you won't find many better than this."

For it's called Damascus stick, is it made of Damascus steel?
Damascus steel weapon with an empty skill slot is valuable, surely.
Even if you want to buy one, you won't find it easily in a weapons shop.
Although I don't need it, I can fuse an appropriate monster card with it.

But I have never seen a Damascus stick at the weapons shop, so it may be risky.
Yet this weapons merchant brought it out just like that?
Is it a counterfeit and the striped pattern is only there to make it look genuine?
Nah, it can't be a counterfeit for Appraisal is showing it as Damascus stick.

"Thank you very much. Also…"
"Is there something else?"

The weapons merchant puts the Damascus stick on the table.
Next, he takes out one more monster card from his Item Box.
High Kobold?

"To tell you the truth, it's rare but this time I was able to get my hands on a High Kobold Monster Card. So, how about this? A High Kobold Monster Card in addition to the Damascus stick and two Kobold Monster Cards. Even a Rod of Offerings may not necessarily be equivalent to this offer."

The weapons merchant offers.
As for the High Kobold Monster Card, I know what it's called,

obviously, but what is it used for?
It's my first time seeing it.

I have no idea.
What do I do now?
I should have brought Sherry with me.

"High Kobold?"

Looking at Luke, I gesture.
If there's anyone who can help me here, it's Luke.

"In exchange for a successfully fused monster card, it's not a bad deal. As for the High Kobold Monster Card, it's rarely exhibited at the auction, so it's difficult to speculate its market price. It's my first time seeing one, too."

Although it's your first time seeing it, you don't have any hint of surprise.
Doesn't it feel like they have some sort understanding?
He claims that his offer is higher than the market value of a Rod of Offerings but there's a possibility that it's actually lower.

I have no idea as to what skill a High Kobold Monster Card gives.
But he said that it's rarely exhibited. So, isn't it better to acquire it?
It won't be a waste.

"If you think it's too low, how about additional 3,000 Nars?"

When I was contemplating, the weapons merchant raises his offer.

"I think it's equivalent to the market price, don't you think?"

What I mean is, if it were the case, you would include 3,000 Nars in the offer from the outset.
It shows your dishonesty.

"Then how about 5,000 Nars?"

He raises his offer further.
If the offer with additional 3,000 Nars was equivalent to the market price, doesn't that make the offer with additional 5,000 Nars higher than the market price?

Should I drag it some more?

“I don’t particularly need a Damascus stick.”
“Well, how about 6,000 nars then?”
“Un”
“How much do you want?”
“How much do I want? I want the value of the Rod of Offerings.”

I wonder if I should cancel the deal.
30% Up will probably not work, too.
I mean, which one will work? 30% Up or 30% Discount?
Because I came here with the intention of selling the Rod of Offerings, I only selected 30% Up.

“Very well. Then in addition to three monster cards and Damascus stick, I’ll give you 10,000 nars. Also, I’ll bear the cost in respect of the guild temple usage fee and the weapon appraisal charges. You will surely not have any complaint now, will you?”

This time, he seemed a little angry.
Have I angered him?
I’m still not fully convinced, though.
Should I call the deal off?

“You said that if it’s around the market price there won’t be any problem. I think this offer is adequate.”

Luke interjects.
I’m not greedy or anything. It’s not like I’m troubled for money.
I’ll get my hands on a High Kobold Monster Card and a Damascus stick, so it’s not that bad.
So, is there nothing else that I can do?

“Oh well, it can’t be helped. I think this offer is acceptable. Also, there’s no need for weapon appraisal. I trust that it’s Damascus stick.”

I accept the offer.
And receive the monster cards, the Damascus stick and gold coins.
30% Up doesn’t seem to have worked.
I put everything in the Item Box.

Thereafter, we proceed to the guild temple.
To verify the monster cards.
Because I can use Appraisal, I don't need verification but I can't say that out loud.
Oh well, it's not like I have to pay for it.

"How was the deal?"

While leaving the waiting room, I part with the weapons merchant and ask Luke.

"It was not a bad deal, in my opinion."
"The ending wasn't happy, though."
"He's a merchant, too. He won't agree to a deal if it's not profitable for him, so I don't think he's angry."

Was that anger just an act?
Brokers are terrible.
The weapons merchant gets angry and then Luke cuts in to play it down. Isn't this a classic yakuza tactic of bargaining?
A technique also used by police to draw voluntary confession.

In other words, yakuza and police are essentially the same.
I can't compete with them.
I wonder if I should have exerted myself more.

Oh well, it must be around the market price; it was probably not a lie.
Nothing can be done about it now.
I'll forgive them this time.

"Since I have acquired a spare card, too, I'll temporarily withdraw from buying Kobold Monster Cards. However, if you find one for cheap, you can bid on it."
"Understood."

I cancel the order for Kobold Monster Card and return home.
I take out a Kobold Monster Card and prepare the earring.

"Sherry, can you perform Monster Card Fusion?"
"Yes, I can."

After all, she didn't seem to have overused her MP when she made leather mittens.
I mean, if she had overused her MP, she would have refused, right?
It's risky.
If needs be, I will have her use recovery medicine.

"Do you know about High Kobold Monster Card?"
"It's the monster card dropped by high-ranked Kobold."

Sherry does seem to know about High Kobold Monster Card.

"Can it be fused together with other monster cards?"
"It seems to be so. If fused together with a High Kobold Monster Card, it's believed that the skill of a card becomes stronger than if fused together with a normal Kobold Monster Card. However, there has been no account of successful fusion."
"No success?"

I question subconsciously.
Is it perhaps a useless card?

"However, just like Kobold, other high-ranked monsters drop high-ranked monster cards, too. There has been a case of successful fusion of a High Kobold Monster Card together with a high-ranked monster card."
"Is that so?"
"Furthermore, there has been no instance of successful fusion of a standalone high-ranked monster card. Therefore, it's believed that a high-ranked monster card must be fused together with a High Kobold Monster Card."

Are there conditions of use?
A high-ranked monster can't drop a useless card, surely.
If you meet the conditions, it can be a powerful monster card.
You're supposed to fuse a High Kobold Monster Card together with another high-ranked monster card, huh?

In other words, if I am to fuse this High Kobold Monster Card, I'll have to first acquire another high-ranked monster card.
So that weapons merchant was actually getting rid of his nuisance.
Why do I feel like I have been had this time?

“Oh well, I’ll get my hands a high-ranked monster card sometime.”
“Umm, there’s a theory that a master smith can’t fuse a high-ranked monster.”

Sherry conveys apologetically.

“So it’s no use?”
“There’s no case of successful fusion by a master smith. However, it’s believed that a high-ranked monster card can be fused by a person with an advanced job of master smith called Sekigan《One-eyed》.”
“One-eyed?”
“It’s a job which every master smith strives to get. Only a master smith, who has performed smithing for a long period of time, can acquire it.”

One-eyed — sounds cool, doesn’t it?
Dragon Knight sounds cool, too.
Yep, when she uses the skill of Master Smith, her hands do glow.
If I keep on looking every time, my eyesight will eventually get bad.

“Is their eyesight bad?”
“Even though it’s called One-eyed, it doesn’t mean that their eyesight is bad.”

It’s not?
Oh well, it would be a terrible job indeed if it made you lose your eye.
If you restored your previous job, would you get your lost eye back?

“Can you please fuse these Goat and Kobold Monster Cards with this earring then?”
“Yes.”

I pass the earring and the monster cards to Sherry.
I’m not using High Kobold Monster Card this time.
If I did, it would end up failed, most likely.

I’m not sure whether it can be fused with a normal monster card, nor am I sure if Sherry, a master smith, can fuse it.
It’s too big a risk.

Because I no longer have the Rod of Offerings, my first priority is to get 2x Intelligence skill.

Sherry fuses the monster card.
After the light subsides, an Earring of Offerings was remaining.
The 2x Intelligence skill has been attached successfully.

“It’s a success. As expected of Sherry.”
“Thank you very much.”

I receive the Earring of Offerings from Sherry.
I put it on my left ear.
When I use Appraisal, it was not showing.
Do I have to remove Sacrificial Misanga?

Only one accessory, whichever is equipped first, seems to be enabled.
If I put earrings on both my ears, not both of them will be enabled.
I remove Sacrificial Misanga and re-equip the earring.

It’s scary to remove Sacrificial Misanga.
Oh well, I’m a rearguard anyway.
I won’t be in a crisis as long as I’m casting spells from the back.
Thus far, there has been no opportunity for Sacrificial Misanga to activate.

What I’m worried about is when I will have to move to the front in order to use Durandal to recover MP.
When that time comes, I’ll equip Sacrificial Misanga.
It’s bothersome.
Although it’s bothersome, it’s still better than regretting ‘why did I not wear Sacrificial Misanga!?’

Not regretting ‘why did I not wear Sacrificial Misanga?’ but ‘why did I receive an attack when I wasn’t wearing Sacrificial Misanga?’
It’ll be really bad.

Where am I? ‘Go to Murasakino’ ‘Go to Netherworld’ (TN: Murasakino is a railway station in Japan)
Just because it was bothersome, this is where I ended up.

There are two more empty skill slots on the Earring of Offerings.

I better get a Caterpillar Monster Card as soon as possible and have it fused.

Chapter 147 - Sacred Spear

I enter Haruba's 23rd floor.
I plan on testing both the Sacred Spear and the Earring of Offerings.
It's scary to suddenly test it against Scissors Lizards but we have already tried it prior to testing the Sacred Spear.
There won't be any trouble, hopefully.

I manage to defeat the monsters faster than when we tried earlier.
I'm becoming fairly stronger.
The basic Sacred Spear is weaker than the Rod of Offerings but the Earring of Offerings has 2x Intelligence skill attached.
So it's alright.

There's another merit in using the Sacred Spear.
Like Sherry, I can thrust the spear from the second row.
It's possible to attack the monsters from behind Miria or Vesta.
As for Roxanne, it's too dangerous to stand behind her.

With the Sacred Spear, I can attack during the cooldown period of the spells.
For now, I will only be able to poke them but once I get used to it, I may be able to kill them.
Also, it will become much easier once I attach MP Recovery skill.

"The only monsters ahead seem to be Ma Breams."
"Oh, I see. Amazing as always, Roxanne. Because I'm going to test something next, it will take longer to defeat the monsters."

After Roxanne informs, I put the Sacred Spear back and take out the Damascus stick.
After all, it will be better not to test Damascus stick against Scissors Lizards.

The monsters appear.
Two Ma Breams.
I cast two [Sandstorm]s.

I start running once I was done casting but no one else moved.

Why?
Eh? I see.
Because they are just Ma Breams, it isn't necessary for us to close in to them.

Is that the reason why Roxanne informed?
I didn't tell them that I will be using Damascus stick or that I want to test something against Ma Breams.
Was there an instruction not to run when it's just Ma Bream?
I hate running with the Sacred Spear so I put it back in my Item Box.
Had I known we would be engaging them like this, I wouldn't have removed it.

Neither Miria nor Vesta started running.
Sherry wouldn't in any case.
When I passed by the two of them, I'm pretty sure they were surprised.
I'm probably the only one who didn't understand.

I cast spells again with a face as if nothing happened.
I'm glad a wizard can cast spells while moving.
I would be embarrassed if I were the only one to start running like a noob.

The Ma Breams have been defeated.
As for the attack power of the Damascus stick, it's higher than a rod's but lower than a staff's, huh?
There's also the effect of 2x Intelligence skill of the accessory, of course.
Although I can't use it as main weapon for it's weaker than the Sacred Spear, it's more than enough as a spare.

I equip the Sacred Spear again and continue with the exploration.
We encounter four Scissors Lizards and one Rtoll Troll.
It's a big family.

This time, the four girls start running immediately.
They understand it fully, huh?
It's confusing.
From the same spot, I cast two [Sandstorm]s and follow them.

I have to cast fire spells if I'm to defeat the Rtoll Troll first but I can't for the Scissors Lizards are resistant to fire.
Even if they weren't resistant, it would still be difficult to decide whether to give priority to the Rtoll Troll or the Scissors Lizards.
Right now, it doesn't make any sense to reduce the group by one Rtoll Troll.

The Scissors Lizards is stronger compared to the monsters from 22nd floor.
I can't afford to delay finishing off the Scissors Lizards.

Roxanne and company confront the monsters.
The front row, comprising the Rtoll Troll and three Scissors Lizards, attacks.

"It's coming."

A magic formation appears under the Scissors Lizard in the back row.
Sparks start dancing immediately after Roxanne's warning.
It's an area of effect magic attack.
It looks like the monster's area of effect magic attack isn't much different from [Firestorm].

In an instant, my whole body heats up.
My chest tightens and my joints start hurting.
My toes feel like they have been plucked.
My skin burns *chirichiri*; A scream of pain leaks out of my mouth.

The three Scissors Lizards, without missing the chance, start attacking.
Roxanne dodges it by twisting her body; Miria leaps back; Vesta blocks it with her swords.
It's good that they avoided the attacks.
I would have been hit for sure had it been me.

Albeit for a moment, I felt pain.
When the heat cools down, the pain eases up.
It doesn't seem to have spread to the clothes and the rucksack.
Only the body seems to be affected by the heat.

The Rtoll Troll is late as it smacks its big arms down.
Roxanne, however, dodges it like nothing happened.
I exact my revenge and cast [Sandstorm].
Sherry readies her spear and keeps a close eye on the monsters to prevent them from attacking again.

Scissors Lizard's area of effect magic attack doesn't seem to possess enough power to be fatal.
It isn't strong enough to cause death in one or two hits.
I cast [Sandstorm]s in succession and defeat the monsters before they could pull something off again.

"Was that the area of effect magic attack?"

I'm still not confident that I can withstand a second one.
And it would be even more dreadful if it were in quick succession.

"It felt like the area of effect magic attack was stronger. Was it my imagination?"

I had [Plating] cast on Roxanne when she received the single target magic attack before.
It's impossible to accurately measure the power of the attack anyway.
To measure it accurately, you would need to take several attacks and die. That's the only way.
I don't want to measure it.

"I'm not sure but it isn't like we can't withstand it. Even if it were strong, nothing could be done about it. But there shouldn't be any problem since most of us can withstand it."

Sherry says something reliable.

"Yes, desu."
"Did any of them drop leather?"

Miria brings leather over while I was healing everyone.
She has already forgotten how to say leather in Brahim.

"You are right. If it's this much, there's nothing to be worried about. Ah, I don't need healing anymore."

Vesta declines healing after only once.
She's reliable, too.
Is she sturdy because she's dragon knight?

"Even if there's no danger anymore, I would hate it if any damage were left."
"Okay, I'm fine now. Thank you very much."

She didn't decline out of modesty, did she?
As for me, I heal myself once more, even though I feel just fine.

What's the difference?
Is resolution the difference?
I continue with the exploration after healing was needed no more.

When we receive area of effect magic attack, it's troublesome to heal everyone right then.
If I didn't heal them now and they were to receive damage during the next battle, I'm afraid I wouldn't be able to help them at that time.
I hope I will be able to heal everyone at same time after I acquire Priest.
Or should I have Sherry take up the job of Shrine Maiden?

It would be better to make Sherry a shrine maiden but I would like her to level Master Smith up.
Even more so, when I think of all the new equipment she will be able to make in the future.
Miria would be an assassin and I would like to have Vesta carry on as a dragon knight.

After the process of elimination, only Roxanne remains, huh?
Roxanne seems to be able to take up any job.
I guess it will be better as things are going to be more difficult from now on.

Thereafter, I finished the exploration in the evening, prepared the bath and completed rest of the day's activities.
After Roxanne, Sherry and the girls tidied up after the dinner, only smithing was left.
It was easy to prepare the bath this time for I set up Basic Water Magic as the skill of Jobless. Today, the temperature seemed high.

I felt refreshed after the bath.

I raked a bit of sweat today.
It wasn't that hot inside the labyrinth, though.
Will night be sweaty, too?
It was chilly early in the morning, though as I was sticking to Vesta.

Anyways, we finished the day's activities with the bath.
After the bath, I finished the night's activities.
Because of Sex Maniac, I didn't get tired.
Even after the hips workout, I didn't get tired.

The next morning. I grab the map and enter Quratar's 22nd floor.
It isn't necessary to enter 22nd floor early in the morning but I would hate it if it were crowded.

"As for Miria's job, I'm thinking of making her an assassin since she has the Estoc of Petrifaction."

I tell them at the entrance of 22nd floor.
Miria has finally reached Warrior Lv30.
She has acquired both Knight and Assassin, obviously.

I told them because I would feel bad if I changed it quietly.
Even though it's Assassin.
Would she dislike it?

"Okay."
"Sure. I think it'll be great to be able to inflict poison."
"Okay, desu."

Even though the title of the job is Assassin, they didn't dislike it?
I was worried for nothing, it seems.
Being Lv1 is a concern, however.

"Since it's a new job, Miria will need a little time. How about placing Miria in the back?"
"I don't think it's necessary."
"There's no such consideration when a party changes a slave's job in the guild. Such consideration isn't needed."
"Fine, desu."

Roxanne, Sherry, and Miria insist that it's fine.
In a party, the job effects of every party member are shared.
She wouldn't be any weaker even if she became Lv1.

"Err, is there really no problem?"
"Since we don't know as to how long she will need to stay in the back, and since the monsters on 23rd floor can use area of effect magic attacks, she won't be safe even in the back."

What Sherry said seems reasonable.
I have Gained Experience 20x on, and I can see the level, too.
The only floor, where Miria will be safe in the back row, is Quratar's 22nd floor, probably.

"I understand. Still, be extra careful for a while."
"Okay, desu."
"Do you want to give the Estoc of Petrifaction a try, Vesta?"
"Umm, I think I want to."
"Alright then, when there are fewer monsters, Miria will pass her sword to Vesta and go to the back row. There shouldn't be any problem in falling back to the second row."

I propose a compromise plan.
It will be better to switch Miria's job to Assassin when there are no more than two monsters.
It's easy for me for I can use Party Job Settings whenever I want.
She won't be able to notice if I switch her job back to Warrior Lv30 when there are three or more monsters.

"Okay, desu."
"Thank you very much."
"Well then, can you please find places with fewer monsters along the route?"

I hand the map to Roxanne and ask of her to guide us.
If there are two monsters, I will leave it to Roxanne and Vesta.
When Miria's job is Assassin, I will send her to the back row.
I can let her attack from the side if there are no more than two but it's better for her to stay safe.

Leveling up of Miria's Assassin job is going smoothly.

I now look forward to Vesta inflicting petrifaction.
Vesta manages to petrify a monster after advancing to some extent through 22nd floor.

“I was able to do it.”
“Did it, desu.”

The Clamshell has been petrified.
I finish it, along with the one Roxanne was keeping company, with a [Sandstorm].

“With this, Vesta has experienced the Estoc of Petrifaction’s power, too.”
“Yes, I think it’s a great weapon.”
“From now on, Miria will be using it. Don’t overdo it, however, since I just changed your job.”
“Okay, desu.”

Her Assassin job has now reached Lv5.
She should be fine fighting on the frontline.

“You can take us to the boss room now. There’s no longer any need to find places with fewer monsters.”

I change my instructions. Roxanne continues to guide us.
We fight on several occasions on the way but Miria’s chance of inflicting petrifaction doesn’t seem to have increased.
That’s fine.
Rather, I should say it’s better.

There’s a skill of Assassin: Abnormal Status Rate Up.
If the chance of petrifaction increased after becoming an assassin, it means the skill was effective.
However, if it didn’t increase, it doesn’t necessarily mean that Abnormal Status Rate Up skill didn’t work.
If the chance of petrifaction doesn’t increase after becoming an assassin, then it means Abnormal Status Rate Up skill depends on the level of Assassin.

Regardless, I plan on having Miria carry on as an assassin.
Her level will go up soon.

If Abnormal Status Rate Up skill depends on the level, the chance of petrifaction will increase eventually.
I look forward to her level increasing.

Miria manages to petrify the Oystershell.
Is it due to Assassin or not?
Its affinity with Gambler's Abnormal Status Resistance Down skill seems to be good.

I don't understand, though, as to how the shell of Oystershell, which is stone to begin with, turned into stone.
I wonder if it just stopped moving.
Without selecting Cook, I clean it up using magic after sending Durandal back.

As expected, the Oystershell didn't leave Oyster behind.
It would be a problem if we obtained just one.

I hand Vesta the Volley which was left behind.
Considering Vesta's need for Volley, she will be receiving a lot of favors on Quratar's 22nd floor.
Also, I can perhaps confirm as to how crowded the boss room is in the evening.

Chapter 148 - Gumi Slime

"The demon on Quratar's 23rd floor is the Gumi Slime. It is weak to fire, wind and water magics. It doesn't have a resistance against any magic. It uses earth area of effect magic, but it doesn't seem to have any resistance to earth magic."

We arrive on the 23rd floor.
Sherry gives us a briefing.

"The Gumi Slime? That's nostalgic."
"It's difficult to fight because it's resistant to swords and spears. It will also absorb a person into it, and the absorbed person will suffer damage when it is attacked, unless it's a magic attack."
"Can you melt it away?"
"Yes, and it needs to be defeated before the absorbed person is digested."

It's a troublesome demon that I've encountered before.
Since I'm on the 23rd floor now, they will be Lv23 and stronger than last time.

"Demons other than those one the 1st floor can appear outside?"
"If there is a village near the labyrinth then only the demons on the first floor will appear outside, that's because there are lots of people nearby, and the demons won't need to move far from the entrance. They also won't be very aggressive. Demons from the 12th floor will show up if there isn't many people nearby, and they'll travel further from the labyrinth. Demons from the 23rd floor will come out if there is nobody nearby, and they will travel long distances and aggressively attack people for food."

That happens?
I understand that a labyrinth eats people for food. So that's what a labyrinth does if there is nobody nearby?
It sends out stronger demons to travel and attack people.

There were Gumi Slime's near Vale. They must have come from a

long distance.
It didn't seem like it was unusual, and the route was patrolled.
It seems like a nuisance.

"Roxanne, can you find a group that just has one or two of them for us to fight?"
"I think so."

I'd like to set the skill of Jobless to one of the Gumi Slime's weaknesses, but I won't be able to change it for a while after I set it.
Basic Earth Magic will do for now as the skill of Jobless.
Earth magic is the weakness of the Clamshell on floor 22, and the Kettle Mermaid on floor 21 in Quratar.
We could keep hunting here until breakfast, but the hunting speed might not be that good.

The Gumi Slime has a lot of weaknesses, just not Earth magic.
We'll fight to test it out a couple of times, and then we might go to Haruba.
The first time you encounter a demon you should be wary, but I've fought a Gumi Slime before, and I've already experienced Lv23 with the Scissor Lizards.
There shouldn't be a problem.

Roxanne guides us to a place with three Gumi Slime Lv23.
It's a nostalgic gel demon.
There are no other demons either, so each vanguard can take one on.
As expected of Roxanne.

Four people start running at once.
I use Lava Hell, the combination of earth magic and fire magic, and then run after them.
The Gumi slimes didn't use their area effect magic before the vanguards met them.

The three vanguards confronted the three Gumi Slimes.
Roxanne easily avoided the body slam of the Gumi Slime.
Vesta drove both her swords into the Gumi Slime.

"It really doesn't feel that effective."

“Don’t worry about attacking it Vesta, concentrate on defense and evasion.”
“Yes, I think so too.”

Vesta nods to Roxanne’s opinion.
Though it’s possible to evade even if you aren’t focusing on it if you’re Roxanne.
Since Miria has the Estoc of Petrification, she should attack it.
The skill will work even if the damage doesn’t have much effect.

A magic formation appears under the Gumi Slime on the left.
Did it try to use area effect magic or regular magic? I don’t knw, because Sherry cancelled it.
The Gumi Slime in the center shakes wildly as it attacks Roxanne.
Roxanne sways and parries it.

“I did it, desu!”

The Gumi Slime to the right is petrified.
The slime becomes hard.
It has a strange shape like it’s defying gravity, probably because it was petrified in the middle of an attack.

It seems the petrification skill does work like normal.
Miria moves around the back of the petrified demon, and attacks the demon in the center.
I destroy the Gumi Slime with magic.
After the Gumi Slime that had become a stone, I defeated the other two as well.

The combat time was longer than it was with the Scissor Lizard, but that’s probably because Jobless’s skill was earth magic.
That will be the standard as we move up in floors.
If both the Scissor Lizard and Gumi Slime appear, I can only focus on one.

“Roxanne, was the Gumi Slime going to absorb you?”
“Yes. You need to be careful not to be absorbed.”

Sherry asks Roxanne after the combat ends.
Was it that thing where the Gumi Slime shook wildly?

Is that how it absorbs you?

“It’s good that we could experience that right at the start. With this, I think we’ll be fine on Quratar’s 23rd floor.”
“Yes. I think we’ll be alright.”

I said to Roxanne after she had confirmed the smell of the surroundings.
Are you checking to see if there’s an easy fight nearby?
It’s good.
Roxanne picks up a slime starch and passes it to me.

“It seems we’ll be able to fight against the Gumi Slime.”

Sherry’s approval gives me peace of mind.

“Starch, desu.”

Miria and Vesta also bring slime starch.
You remember the name because it’s used to fry tempura?
If fish are involved, you are strong.

Slime starch doesn’t seem to be a rare drop since three were left behind.
After putting them in the box, we head to Haruba’s 23rd floor.
We’ll explore until breakfast, and then enter the labyrinth again later.
The opponents are Scissor Lizards.

Earth magic is the Scissor Lizards weakness.
Ma Bream from the 22nd floor’s weakness is also Earth magic, so Haruba’s 23rd floor is a floor which is relatively easy to fight on.
Since the demons become more powerful on the 23rd floor, this is welcome.
We should be able to adapt to the upper levels relatively smoothly.

Though the Scissor Lizards have gotten stronger, I’ve gotten stronger as well with my earrings and saint spear.
We can fight without a problem.
The 23rd floor is fine.
Our party will be fine even if we go up a few more floors.

Our levels started rising again too.

By evening, I became Explorer Lv46
For an Explorer, it's easy to notice that your level has increased when you use your item box.

Explorer reached Lv45 several days ago, but Lv44 was a long time before that.
The time it took to pass Lv45 was quite short.
With the stronger Scissor Lizards, the experience must have gone up as well.
If not, it would have taken longer to reach Explorer Lv46.

I can't hope that the level will go up every day, but it should go up easier for a while.
My level became difficult to increase at Lv40, and Roxanne's slowed down at Lv30, so I think the next wall will be Lv50.
That's good.
Since Explorer Lv50 is the condition for Adventurer, I can switch to Adventurer when Explorer stops at Lv50.

Roxanne's level went up yesterday.
Roxanne is Beast Warrior Lv32, Sherry is Master Smith Lv35, Miria is Assassin Lv21, and Vesta is Dragon Knight Lv30.
Roxanne became Knight Lv33 yesterday, and I changed it in secret with Beast Warrior Lv32.
It has not gone up yet since I switched it.

Sherry became master Smith Lv35, so my worries about smithing are becoming less and less.
If she fails in the crafting on a new piece of equipment, we can re-try it reasonably soon.
We should succeed.

Of course, Miria's Assassin went up because it's level is still low.
I think petrification may have occurred more often this evening?
Maybe it's my imagination?

You can consider that Vesta is full-fledged now because she made it to Lv30.
She is a reliable vanguard.
There is a sense of security that you get standing behind the giant Vesta as she wields two swords.

Demons appear, and four people start running.
One Scissor Lizard, and one Ma Bream.
I use double earth magic, and start running as well.

Roxanne and Vesta face the demons.
Miria goes to the side and attacks the Scissor Lizard.
Sherry arrives at the same time, so we don't get hit by area effect magic.

I also caught up after shooting magic.
I attack Ma Bream with the saint spear.
I attack it from Vesta's diagonal so I don't interfere with Sherry.

I don't know if attacking with the saint spear will decrease the amount of times I have to attack with magic.
Sometimes it's not enough.
I'd rather do it than not though.
I need to keep training.

"I did it, desu!"

The Scissor Lizard became petrified.
It's petrified with it's scissors raised.
Is it easier for Miria to petrify things?

All attacks concentrate on Ma Bream.
Ma Bream was defeated with [Sand Ball].
Saint spear is put away in the item box, and Durandal is pulled out with [Character Reset].
My MP was getting low.

I'm the only one attacking the Scissor Lizard.
The lizard is killed from the continuous attacks from Durandal.
I defeated it with no trouble because it did not move.

"I'll be fighting with the sword Roxanne, so lead us to a place with just a few demons."

I remove the earing of offerings, and take out my sacrificial misanga.
It's troublesome, but I have to think of safety.
I don't want to regret it later.
I make my sixth job Warrior as well.

“Um, I’ll tie it on.”
“You will? Then please tie it to my wrist.”

I specified because Roxanne might try and tie it to my ankle.
I hold out my right hand, and the sacrificial misanga gets tied on.

“I’m glad to help, Master.”
“You’re always useful Roxanne, Thank you.”
“Thank you too.”

Roxanne ties it on as she checks the smell of the surroundings.
When she finishes tying it, she leads us off.
When we follow her, a group of one Scissor Lizard and one Ma Bream appear again.
Everyone begins to run.

Vesta stood in front of Ma Bream.
I come from the side and use [Rush] against Ma Bream.
It’s quite cramped in the cave with four vanguards.
With me using Durandal, and Vesta swinging two swords, it’s almost impossible to fit.

So we are guided to a place with few demons.
I could pass the Sacred Spear to someone, but it would be a waste to remove Roxanne from the front line.
Miria has the Estoc of Petrification.
Vesta is the Lv30 Dragon Knight.

So I just decided on Roxanne guiding us somewhere with few demons.
If there’s not many demons, there’s less chance I’ll be attacked.
If there’s just two, I can fight safely from the back, like with the boss.
Ma Bream first, and then Scissor Lizard are killed.

After another group, Durandal is removed.
I can absorb a considerable amount of MP from one Scissor Lizard.
Even if there isn’t many, I don’t need to fight much.

“Can you take this off?”
“Um, can Sherry do it?”

“Ok, Sherry, can you remove this?”
“Yes.”

Are they taking turns?
I hold out my right hand, and the sacrificial misanga is removed by Sherry.
After that I equip the earrings of offerings.
It’s still troublesome.

After recovering MP, we’ll make this the last bit of exploration for today.
We are hit by area of effect magic.
A Scissor Lizard stayed behind to shoot it, so Sherry’s spear did not reach it.

The area of effect magic isn’t dangerous, but it’s painful.
If it’s used more often, or the damage becomes large, we’ll have to make counter measures. If it stays like this, it’s fine.
It’s not a problem, but it’s not light enough to ignore either.
It’s just annoying.

There’s no problem if it’s not fired in rapid succession, and we defeat a demon.
A Ma Bream is defeated, and the Scissor Lizard comes forward.
It can’t fire in rapid succession like this.
The Scissor Lizard that came forward is petrified, it and another Scissor Lizard are defeated, and an Rtoll Troll is defeated last.

I treated everyone as they collected the items.
Vesta still doesn’t need much treatment.
Does she have low sensitivity to damage?

It’s troublesome to treat everyone separately, but it can’t be helped.
It could be serious if I don’t stop to treat everyone properly.
It’s a good thing to do.

There are some plans for medical treatment too.
Tomorrow is the day the clothes I ordered are ready.
We should train immediately.
A waterfall awaits me.

Chapter 149 - The Waterfall

For the dinner, we have special fatty tuna boiled in fish sauce, made by Miria, and breaded pork cutlet.
After all, because Miria would hog the fatty tuna all for herself, I fried some pork, too.
It's a little hot, so we'll have to wait.
Tempura shouldn't be fried for too long.

"So this is fatty tuna, huh? It's as delicious as I expected."

When I put the fatty tuna boiled in the fish sauce, made by Miria, in my mouth; it crumbles and melts.
Soft.
It's rich in fat.
It's rich but not excessively rich.

As for richness, it's the flavor that's rich.
After slicing a piece, I quickly pass it to Roxanne.

"It's delicious."
"This is amazing."

Roxanne and Sherry swiftly pass the dish between them.
Next, I try the pork cutlet.
Because there's no sauce, I'm eating it with plain lemon juice.
If I think about it, the fatty tuna broth can do the job.

I run a trial. Pass.
It tastes like miso cutlet.
But we didn't use miso.
It's probably due to the fish sauce.

"Miria, can I have just the broth?"
"Okay, desu."
"Can I have it, too?"

When I take some broth out of the dish, which Miria was holding, Roxanne shows interest in it as well.

It’s B-grade gourmet. When I say it’s B-grade gourmet, I mean that it’s not recommended.
Sherry seems to be content with the lemon juice.

“Hee, may I have some broth, too?”
“Eat fatty tuna, too, desu.”

When Vesta asks for some broth, Miria presents her the dish.
I don’t recommend it, though.

“Okay, thank you very much.”
“Onee-chan, desu.”

Is she looking out for Vesta as her senpai?
But I still don’t recommend it.
I don’t mean to refrain you guys from eating or anything.

The combo of fatty tuna broth and pork cutlet is a new discovery.
Let’s try it again sometime.

The next day. After the breakfast, we head to the clothing shop in the Imperial Capital.

“Welcome, sir. The clothes you ordered are ready.”

The male shop clerk leads me in after greeting and hands me the clothes.
It’s a pure white, silk gown.
By the way, the price of Sherry’s clothes is the same as others’.
But it’s not unreasonable since they are not charging extra for Vesta’s either.

“Sherry, can we change clothes on-site?”
“Yes, there shouldn’t be any problem, I think.”
“I think you can change clothes at the priests’ guild.”

The male shop clerk interjects.
He’s not aware of the fact that I won’t be going to the priests’ guild.
Was it careless of me to ask Sherry here?

Actually, even before that, wouldn’t he be wondering as to why four people of the same party are trying to be shrine maiden?

However, not everyone who applies to be a shrine maiden can become one, so it's not strange to let all the members have a go at the ascetic training.

"Got it."
"I look forward to your next visit."

After the four of them put their clothes in their respective rucksacks, we leave the shop.
From the Imperial Capital's adventurers' guild, I warp us to Hafen.
Because the day market would be open at this time and Miria would, therefore, be overly noisy; I warped us to the neighboring woods.

"Miria, do you know where the waterfall is?"
"This way, desu."

Miria starts walking confidently.
She seems to know it, surprisingly.
Information related to the fishing spots can't elude her, is that the reason why?
I was thinking of soliciting Field Walk of an adventurer should we be unable to find the location but it doesn't seem to be required.

"Well, let's go and have a look then?"
"I guess."
"O-Okay."
"Because such an experienced person as Sherry will be teaching us, we are in safe hands."

I urge Sherry forward and follow after her.

"Go, desu."
"My pleasure."

We proceed under Miria's lead.
The monsters are said to have appeared in the vicinity of the waterfall, so I have Durandal prepared.
Everyone is following Miria.

We advance through the woods on a pathway.
Before long, the pathway narrows down to an animal trail.
Because the waterfall is no longer in the guild's use, no one would

like to go there unnecessarily.

When we move deeper into the woods, it turns into a forest.
Even the animal trail, which was narrowed down from the pathway, has disappeared but we continue to advance.
Durandal has turned into a sickle but we continue to advance.
We advance on the pathway which is no longer a pathway.

There's no pathway in front of us.
There's no pathway behind us either. It's all forest.
Aah, nature.

Aah, Miria.
Does she really know where the waterfall is?
Does she even know that she knows?
She never came here for fishing, I'm certain.

I really wanted to say that but I decide to keep quiet or it'll be taken as if I don't trust her.
The other three are following without complaining.
I knew I should have asked of an adventurer, who has visited the waterfall, for help.

The forest opens up a bit after a while.

"xxxxxxxxxx"
"There seems to be a river ahead."

Although it's not wide, it isn't narrow enough to be called a stream, so it can be called a river.
Because there's a waterfall nearby, it's natural for there to be a river.
Was Miria following the sound of the river?

"It's river. R-i-v-e-r."
"River, desu."
"The waterfall seems to be upriver"
"Let's go then?"

Now that we are close to the river bank, it has become easier to walk.
Since there's a river, there must be a waterfall, so I'm feeling better.
While peering into the river water, Miria advances.

Something seems to be ahead.
The moment I thought that, appears a bee.
It's a Grass Bee.
There's a Grass Bee at the other end.

Because it's yellow and black in color, it's visible inside the forest even from a distance.
The Grass Bee Lv1 closes in on us.

The Grass Bees here seem to actively attack people.
We have walked a distance off Hafen. Is there a labyrinth nearby?
Or is it their route?

"Here it comes."
"It's alright."

I have Roxanne stay put and step forward myself.
I take it on with Durandal which had turned into a sickle.
When I slash the bee, it collapses.
One hit.

"As expected of Master."
"So the guild seems to have abandoned this waterfall because the Grass Bees appeared."

According to Sherry, this ascetic training ground has been abandoned due to the Grass Bees.
Most of the people performing the ascetic training to become shrine maiden must be young and low level.
So they won't take unnecessary risk.
If someone died during the ascetic training, it would be troublesome.

When we move further upriver, there was a waterfall.
The sound of the falling water can be heard.
Although it's not a big waterfall, it's a waterfall nonetheless.

The waterfall spans over a 10-meter-wide area.
Its height is about 3 meters.
There's adequate quantity of water.

"It's quite a big waterfall."
"I guess."

Roxanne nods.

“Of course, that’s why the priests’ guild used it.”

Sherry says affirmatively.
If the waterfall were too small, it would be difficult for the guild to use it as an ascetic training ground.

“Wow, desu.”
“I think it’s a magnificent waterfall.”

If it’s this high, Vesta won’t have any problem.

“Well then, change your clothes behind the waterfall.”
“Umm, okay.”
“No one’s watching. I’ll be on the lookout.”

I send the four of them and patrol the perimeter.
I so wanna watch them changing clothes.
If we were at home, I could see all I wanted.
Here, however, someone has to be on the lookout.

I’m patrolling with Durandal in my hands.
The weather is cool in this part of the forest – the vicinity of the waterfall.
It was hot when we were walking but here, around the waterfall, it’s not.
The breeze is chilly.

On the contrary, it’s good that it’s summer.
We are doing it only for the purpose of acquiring the job. Otherwise, the religious austerities in winter are out-of-fashion now.
Cold weather is terrible.

Patrolling around the waterfall, I tidy up the Grass Bees.
There are quite a few.
They are not appearing in groups, however. It looks more like their route.
Still, I need to be cautious.

After I take some out, Roxanne comes out from the behind the waterfall.

In white clothes.
All four of them are wearing the same, white clothes.

Although it's not as fitting on the body as a kimono, it still looks sexy, strangely.
There's just one sheet of fabric on top of the undergarment.
The seam on Roxanne's and Vesta's chests is loose.
They look savory.

At some places on the arms and the shoulders, it's see-through.
It feels same as seeing the bra-line through the shirt of a highschool girl.
But there are no bras here, so no bra-line can be seen.
The only undergarment they're wearing underneath is the pumpkin-pantsu.

I want to push them down but I restrain myself after I remind myself of the purpose of this visit.
Patience. Patience.

"Do I have to stand in line with the waterfall so that the falling water strikes my head?"
"Yes. It's said that it eradicates impure thoughts from your mind and unites you with the god. After you unite with the god, you receive a holy power. The power to heal those whom you hold dear."

Sherry teaches me the steps.
There were some parts in her explanation full of mysticism which I ignored.

"Can you demonstrate, please?"
"O-Okay. I couldn't become a shrine maiden, though."
"It's alright, you just have to show us the steps."
"Err… Umm… That… We need someone to be on the lookout up the waterfall."

I urge Sherry to demonstrate but she lacks confidence.
Even though it's all good.

"Well then, I'll be on the lookout."

When Roxanne volunteers, Sherry resignedly enters the basin of the

waterfall.
The white clothing, now wet, sticks to her skin.
Like I thought, the white, thin silk is see-through.
Ooh

No, don't.
I must not lose sight of the purpose.
I take my clothes off, too.
It's all for the sake of the purpose.

The falling water strikes Sherry.
While the white splashes were scattering off her head, she was withstanding the force of the water.
If it's this season, the temperature of the water won't be an issue.

Roxanne and Vesta are taking turns on the lookout and observing Sherry.
I'm not watching just Sherry. I'm paying attention to the surroundings, too.
But I can't see clearly through the waterfall.

"Fish, desu."

A certain someone is on the lookout for something totally else.
Before long, Sherry comes out of the waterfall.
The water is dripping off her.
The white clothes, which are now completely wet, are sticking to her skin.

Don't. Don't.
Don't lose sight of the purpose.

"Such a feeling."
"Is that so? I'll be next then. Vesta, take this sword. I'll leave the monsters to you."

I ask of Vesta and pass Durandal to her.
I try not to look at the girls and enter the basin.
The purpose comes first.
Don't get caught up in the evil thoughts.

The basin of the waterfall is about 1-meter deep.

It may be even deeper but I choose the shallower spot and stand under the waterfall.
The flow is quite strong.
The water keeps on falling.

It's difficult.
When the water falls onto me, the force shakes my entire body.
In order not to get washed away under the flow of water, I have the axis of my body parallel to the waterfall.
Perfectly straight and perpendicular (to the ground).

The water is striking the top of my head.
The water is falling.
The water is falling. The water is falling.
The water is falling. The water is falling. The water is falling.

Mind unification seems to be the requirement of acquiring Priest and Shrine Maiden.

Priest's skill is the same as the skill of Sherry's Shrine Maiden.
Priest and Shrine Maiden are the same jobs.
Priest is for males while Shrine Maiden is for females.

"How was it?"
"To stand in line with the waterfall really was terrible. By the way, Sherry, you seem to have acquired Shrine Maiden, too."
"Is that true?"
"Why would I lie to you?"

Well, technically, it's not a lie.
It's true that Sherry has acquired Shrine Maiden.
Did I ever say that she acquired it now?

"Thank you very much."

Sherry seems to be pleased, so it was worth it.

"Well then, go up and swap places with Roxanne."
"Understood."

I have Sherry go up.
The white clothing, stuck to her back, is looking sexy.
The purpose has already been fulfilled.
I can now watch slowly and thoroughly.

"Miria, Vesta, stand in line with the waterfall. You already know the steps, I believe."
"I think it'll be alright."
"Yes, desu."

Miria was puzzled but when I point to the waterfall, she nods and goes ahead.
Vesta hands Durandal over to me before entering the waterfall.
Her watermelons, covered by the gown, tied with a string, look magnificent.
Roxanne, too, has come down the top of the waterfall.

"Roxanne, stand in line with the waterfall."

“Okay, understood.”

When she enters, her chest shakes intensely.
Because her clothes are loose, it’s shaking even more violently.
This destructive force is immense.
Even more so than the waterfall.

Chapter 150 - Priest

Following Miria and Vesta, Roxanne enters the waterfall and starts the ascetic training.
The figures of the three, lined up in white clothes, look extremely sexy.
Even though I can't see clearly due to the splashing water.

Miria comes out of the waterfall first.
Her wet hair looks beautiful.
Her skin, which can be seen through her wet clothes, looks sexy, too.
But she hasn't acquired Shrine Maiden.

It was a little too early for it to be acquired.
Even I was struck by the waterfall for a longer period of time, I think.

"Try again."

I have her start again.
Miria enters the waterfall again.
The next to come out is, again, Miria.
This time, she entered last, so she ought to have come out last, no?

"Difficult, desu."
"Unify your mind properly."
"Do, desu."

I send her back.
Will it be alright?
In the worst case, Miria won't be able to acquire Shrine Maiden.
That'll be alright, too.

Vesta comes out next.
She's panting; her chest is heaving under her white clothes.
Chest…

Thin, wet silk is clinging to her chest.
Her large fruits are gently wrapped.

Her light-brown skin can clearly be seen through her white clothes.
I wonder how the contrast of dark skin under the white clothes would look like.

“I think I was able concentrate but I’m not too sure.”

She did concentrate.
For she has acquired Shrine Maiden.
I, however, can’t concentrate.
No, wait. Am I not already concentrating on ‘it’?

“Is that so? Well, Vesta doesn’t have to stand in line with the waterfall anymore. You have acquired Shrine Maiden.”

It really is convenient to be able to check the jobs of the party members.
I can immediately tell if they have succeeded in acquiring the job.

“Thank you very much. There’s a monster.”

Vesta points.
I was concentrating only on ‘Vesta’ but she seemed to be attentive of the surroundings.
She saved us.

I attack with Durandal and cut the Grass Bee.
I don’t have any equipment on but I was still able to take it out in one hit?
I only put the shoes on.
There’s no problem in getting wet for it’s summer.

I return after finishing the bee off.
From Vesta’s side, I check her and Roxanne out.

“Again.”

Miria comes out of the waterfall but I send her back.
I doubt she’s concentrating properly.

Roxanne has yet to come out.
Based on the Party Job Settings, she hasn’t acquired Shrine Maiden yet.

She seems to be struggling.

Vesta and I acquired the job immediately.
Is this what you call ‘cut out for the job’?

“How was it to get struck by the waterfall, Vesta?”
“It was very relaxing. My consciousness faded in comfort.”

Was that so?
Did it really feel good?
It was a waterfall, after all.
It wasn’t a hot water shower.

Dragon Knights are tenacious, is that why?
Because she’s taller than me, the force of the water would be relatively less on her.
But I don’t think it was just that.

Because it’s Vesta, I’m pretty sure she wasn’t thinking about anything.
People who don’t think about anything seem to acquire Shrine Maiden quickly.
I acquired Priest quickly, too.
Was I really not thinking about anything?
Nah, Sherry acquired Shrine Maiden, too.
I hope she’s okay.

“It’s difficult.”

Roxanne comes out.
She’s wet; her clothes are sticking to her skin.
It matches well with her white skin.

Miss Cherry in white silk. (TN: Sakuranbo-san)
My consciousness is completely concentrated at one place.
This seems to be the way of acquiring Priest.

“When the water was falling, was your consciousness not concentrated on the flow of water?”
“Un, the water was falling here like this and there like this.”

I don’t get what she means by ‘here like this and there like this’.

It’s not good for the cognitive faculties to be too strong.
I wonder if Roxanne’s perception is oversensitive.
Although it’s useful in perceiving movement of a monster and dodge its attack but it’s not suitable for mind unification.

“Perceive the flow of water as a whole.”
“I’ll try.”

After giving a piece of advice to Roxanne, I send her back.
Right after, Miria comes out.
Miria’s perception is, likewise, too strong.
But I get to look at her wet figure, so it’s good.

After I send Miria back, Roxanne comes out.
She has acquired Shrine Maiden.

“Ooh, you did it. You have acquired Shrine Maiden.”
“Yes, thank you very much. I was able to understand the flow of water as a whole, somehow.”

Did you understand?
Even I don’t understand, although I was the one who taught you.
I wonder what it was that you understood.
Oh well, because Miss Cherry seems pleased, it’s good.

“What’s Miria’s progress?”
“She has understood the flow of water as a whole but…”

Miria came out but she still hadn’t acquired Shrine Maiden.
Roxanne demonstrated it to her via exaggerated movement.

“Miria, if you are trying to catch fish and it senses you, it flees, right?”
“Yes, desu.”
“Therefore, in order not to let the fish escape, you hide your presence, right? Similarly, when you’re under the waterfall, you have to become one with it. If you become one with the waterfall, the fish won’t be able to flee.”
“Understand, desu.”

After coming up with some bullshit, I send her back.
It’s the only piece of advice I can give her.

After getting struck by the waterfall for quite a long period of time, Miria comes out.
She has acquired Shrine Maiden.

“Alright. Well done, Miria.”
“Fish, catch, desu.”

Do I have to make some fish food for her?

“Everyone has acquired the job. Very well done.”

After calling Sherry back, I appreciate everyone.

“Thank you very much.”
“It’s great that I could acquire it this time.”
“Catch, desu.”
“I think it’s great.”

Sherry didn’t acquire the job this time but, like she said, it’s great nevertheless.
The four beauties, lined up in white clothes, wet, are looking spectacular.
Sherry’s clothes, however, have dried up, somewhat.
What a sight. A sight for sore eyes.

“In the future, I’ll normally be the healer. However, the higher we move up the floors, the more difficult it’ll get to heal, so I’ll have everyone try Shrine Maiden out. The more healing options we have, the better.”
“Okay. I would like to try it.”

As expected, Roxanne steps forward.
Making Roxanne a Shrine Maiden is an option, too.

“Earlier, because Shrine Maiden was attractive, I tried to acquire the job. Now, however, I would like to stick to Master Smith to gain more experience in order to be able to make more equipment.”
“Sherry will be Master Smith then. As for Miria, her main job will be Assassin.”
“Okay.”
“Do, desu.”

It’s a good thing that she wants to be an Assassin, isn’t it?
Then why am I feeling uneasy?

“I think I’ll do fine as a Shrine Maiden, too.”
“In your case, Vesta, I think Dual Wielding brings a good balance, so I’ll have you keep Dragon Knight as your main job.”
“Okay.”

So, is Roxanne the only one able to take up Shrine Maiden?
Under present conditions, she can reach Lv10 in a blink of an eye.
It’s better to try various things out.

“Alright. For now, let’s go back home.”

I decide to return home.
Although spending some time playing in the river may not be a bad idea, there may be Helicobacter Pylori.
Also, there’s another reason.

“It’ll be a waste to use this outfit just once.”
“It can be used as nightwear once dried.”
“I guess.”

I go behind the waterfall while talking to Roxanne.
After confirming that everyone has packed their baggage, I cast Warp and head back home.
It goes without saying that I removed Priest immediately upon returning home and selected Sex Maniac.
There’s a limit to my patience.

After a short break, we entered the labyrinth.
I tried Priest out.
I removed Monk and selected Priest but could find no opportunity to test it.
Was the time insufficient?

The next morning. I get to use the skill of Priest for the first time.
After the Scissors Lizard launches area of effect magic attack, I cast Area of Effect Healing.

“Did you guys recover properly?”
“Yes, we are fine.”

After taking the monsters out, I confirm.
Everyone seems to have been healed properly.
Because Area of Effect Healing can heal all the members at the same time, it's really convenient.

There's no way of knowing exactly but the extent of Priest's healing seemed somewhat less than Monk's.
Should I revert back?
It may be due to the fact that Priest is low level at this point.

Ooi, MP consumption is high, too.
But it can't be helped.
If Priest could heal everyone at the same time for the same consumption of MP, no one would go for Monk.
The reduction in the efficiency of MP consumption is unavoidable.

After the breakfast, we played with the Scissors Lizards till the evening.
During the entire day in the labyrinth, we were bombarded with a few area of effect magic attacks.
In a large group of monsters, the Scissors Lizard in the back row was especially troublesome.
Even if it used magic attack, we couldn't do anything for Sherry's spear can't reach that far.

Now, however, even it attacks continuously, there's nothing to be worried about for I have Area of Effect Healing.
There's nothing to be concerned about on 23rd floor anymore.
There shouldn't be any problem in moving up to the next floor.

"Master, there's a message from Mr. Luke. He has successfully bid on a Caterpillar Monster Card."

Evening. When we return home after buying food ingredients, there was a note from Luke at the entrance.
He seems to have successfully bid on a Caterpillar Monster Card.
Now that I have Earring of Offerings, I can't switch accessories every time I use Durandal.
With this, every problem we could encounter on 23rd floor would be solved.

“There’s still some time left? I’ll be heading to the Merchant’s Guild. I’ll have to ask of you guys to prepare the dinner.”
“Okay, understood. Please take care.”

Strike while the iron is hot.
I should obtain it as quickly as possible.
I returned a little ahead of time to prepare the bath but I decide to head to the Merchant’s Guild.

Lately, with the skill of Jobless, it has become easier to heat the bath, so we take bath almost everyday.
Although we were struck by the waterfall just yesterday, relaxing in the hot water is something entirely else.

In the Merchant’s Guild, I call for Luke.
Luke comes over right away.
I go to the meeting room and buy the Caterpillar Monster Card.
It’s a genuine card.

If I fuse it with the Earring of Offerings, I’ll have two spare Sacrificial Misangas.
It’s more than enough, isn’t it?
Should I withdraw the order of Caterpillar Monster Cards then?
Or should I get one more monster card as a spare?

I’ll withdraw the order next time.
I would be able to give an excuse that the Monster Card Fusion succeeded last time.
Only after buying several times can I say that it succeeded.

“Also, there’s a message for you from the order of Harz Duchy knights. You are required to appear at your earliest.”

In addition to the monster card, Luke also had a message for me.
A summon from the Duke of Harz.
His stock of mirrors must have depleted.

“Got it. I’ll go tomorrow.”
“Please.”

Now that I have been called, I can’t not go.
After receiving the message, I return home.

After the dinner, I take out the Earring of Offerings and the Caterpillar Monster Card, and hand it to Sherry.

“Do you want to have it fused?”
“It’s the Caterpillar Monster Card which I bought just now. Would it be fine with an earring? The equipment would break if Sacrifice skill were to activate but…”

When Sacrifice skill activates, the equipment will break. This is the reason why this skill is normally attached to such a cheap equipment as misanga.
It’s a shame that an equipment could break if this skill were attached to it.
However, because the number of equipment one can put on is limited, I can’t waste a precious space on Sacrificial Misanga.
Also, thus far, it hasn’t activated even once, so I don’t care.

“Although it may break, it can’t be helped.”
“If I remember correctly, isn’t this the same earring which the Goat Monster Card was fused with last time?”
“This is the same earring.”

Sherry stiffens.

“It’s alright.”
“Umm, if the fusion fails, the previously, painstakingly attached skill will be lost.”
“No problem.”

Although I have told her that I can tell whether a skill can be attached or not, I haven’t expressly told her that I can use Appraisal.
She’s under pressure.
Oh well, as long as there is an empty skill slot, the fusion will succeed.

“O-Okay, I’ll perform the fusion then.”

After calming herself down, Sherry picks up the Earring of Offerings and the monster card with difficulty.
When she invokes the skill, her hands start glowing.
The moment the light subsides, the Earring of Offerings was

remaining.

Earring of Offerings | Accessory
Skills | 2x Intelligence | Sacrifice | Empty

Even though there are two skills now, the name of the Earring of Offerings has still not changed?
One skill slot is still empty.

“Ooh, you did it, didn’t you? As expected of Sherry.”
“Thank you very much.”

Like I conjectured, if there are multiple empty skill slots, multiple skills can be attached.
Sherry’s playing field has expanded from this point onward.

Credits

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